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Children
Challenges
Choices

Single Moms Planning Tomorrow

Workshop Manual
and Leader's Guide
March, 1991

Alberta
CAREER DEVELOPMENT
AND EMPLOYMENT

CANADIA
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Children Challenges Choices

Single Moms Planning Tomorrow

WORKSHOP OVERVIEW:

Purpose:

The purpose of this workshop is to provide pre-career planning groundwork for single young mothers who are social assistance recipients. Many single mothers were at one time financially dependent on their spouses, boyfriends or parents, and may have exchanged one dependent state for another: welfare. Most dream of attaining independence eventually, or a greater measure of financial self-sufficiency, but may not know how to achieve that goal.

Providing this workshop may serve as necessary bridging to career planning and ultimately to greater independence.

Background:

Major findings of a recent report "Job Training For People on Social Assistance," prepared by Dianne Kinnon for the National Anti-Poverty Organization in 1989 indicated that:

- Social assistance recipients have an overwhelming drive for independence and embrace real opportunities to become more employable.

- Many individuals face a daunting array of financial, practical and psychological barriers to entering and completing training programs and then making the transition to paid employment.

Social assistance recipients live in poverty and often have few resources to bring to training. The system itself does much to erode their dignity and self-esteem." [1]

Consultants and instructors who provide career planning to single mothers who are receiving social assistance, report that the barriers to independence for this group are particularly difficult. Few have the combination of education and skills that will eventually enable them to achieve a job to support a family; many are so overwhelmed with the responsibilities of single parenting that they are unable to believe that they will ever be able to make a change for the better.

The challenge then is to provide an experience that lowers the barriers and provides each participant with the new belief that change for the better is achievable. Hence, this workshop ***Children Challenges Choices.***

When piloting the workshop best results were obtained when two modules were covered per day, over a three day period. This provided a suitably intense workshop and limited the childcare arrangements that were necessary. When organizing your workshop, be aware also of special circumstances: holidays, school holidays, availability of public transportation, etc. With the three day format in mind, two facilitators are recommended.

So that facilitators and organizations throughout the province of Alberta can implement this workshop with their clients, additional copies of the workshop and additional background information are available through Information Development and Marketing, Alberta Career Development and Employment at (403) 422-1794. To assist your marketing, the final page of this manual is a brochure which can be completed and copied for advertising purposes.

1 **The Employability Resources Network Newsletter, No. 5, Fall, 1990**. Page 1. Media Concepts Communications Inc., Ottawa, Ontario.

Objectives:

- to provide a safe environment for participants to explore personal situations and their understanding of societal expectations.
- to encourage the development of a positive sense of self-worth in each participant, in essence, to turn what they perceive as the negatives into positives.
- to encourage a sense of independence and personal responsibility in participants.
- to help participants understand the impact of sex-role stereotyping on their goal-setting, particularly with regard to career plans.
- to encourage motivation toward goal setting, career planning, and financial independence, and to begin to outline a plan to achieve greater financial self-sufficiency.
- to encourage participants to consider becoming involved in other learning situations by providing a learning experience where the content is personally relevant and useful to the participants.

Considerations:

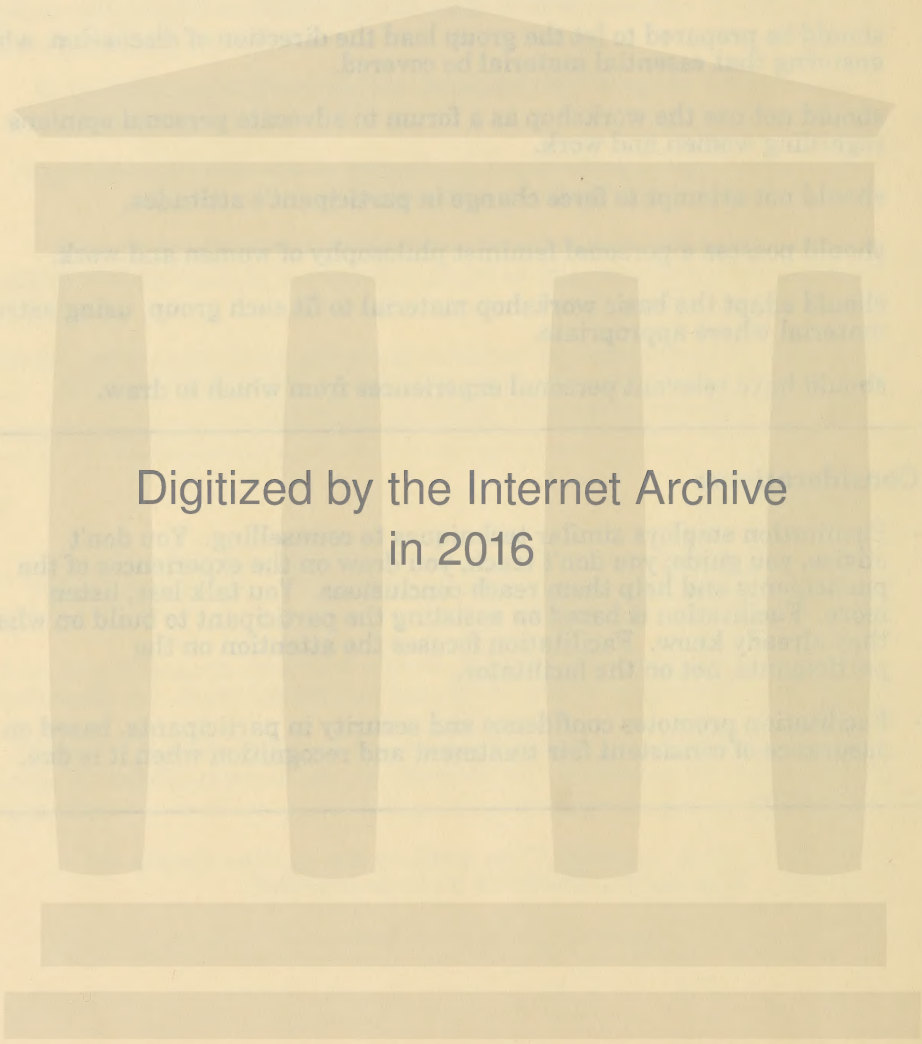
- Facilitators should assess their personal attitudes toward social assistance recipients, toward women, and particularly toward single mothers who work outside the home.
- Facilitators should be prepared to provide follow-up counselling or make referrals as necessary, where additional individual needs are identified.
- Physical arrangements should be roomy and comfortable. Tables and chairs should be moveable and versatile for the accommodation of small group work.
- Good childcare is essential if the mothers are to relax during the workshop. Appropriate childcare must be provided.

Facilitator Skills:

- should understand interpersonal and group dynamics, and be skilled in facilitating groups of adults.
- should be able to deal with hostility in a non-threatening manner and be skilled at handling confrontation.
- should be prepared to let the group lead the direction of discussion while ensuring that essential material be covered.
- should not use the workshop as a forum to advocate personal opinions regarding women and work.
- should not attempt to force change in participant's attitudes.
- should possess a personal feminist philosophy of women and work.
- should adapt the basic workshop material to fit each group, using extra material where appropriate.
- should have relevant personal experiences from which to draw.

Considerations:

- Facilitation employs similar techniques to counselling. You don't advise, you guide; you don't teach, you draw on the experiences of the participants and help them reach conclusions. You talk less, listen more. Facilitation is based on assisting the participant to build on what they already know. Facilitation focuses the attention on the participants, not on the facilitator.
- Facilitation promotes confidence and security in participants, based on assurance of consistent fair treatment and recognition when it is due.



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WORKSHOP OUTLINE

Module 1 - *This Is Where I Start!*

Agenda	Time (Minutes)	Page#	Facilitator
Workshop Overview	20	8	
Introduction to Module 1	2	11	
What's In A Name?	23	12	
Human Treasures	10	14	
What's In Your Pocket or Purse?	20	16	
Break	15		
I Know...I Need to Know	30	17	
Ideal Working Situation	25	19	
My Accomplishments	15	23	
Closing Exercise	20	25	
	Total 180		
	(3 hours)		

Module 2 - *Self-Esteem (Feeling Good About Myself!)*

Agenda	Time (Minutes)	Page#	Facilitator
Introduction	2	26	
Warm-up	13	28	
My Declaration of Self-Esteem	5	29	
The "Pot" Exercise	15	31	
Brag Session	25	33	
Mental Sabotage to Positive Self-Esteem	30	34	
Break	15		
Low Self-Esteem Vicious Circle	10	37	
Increasing Self-Esteem	15	39	
Compliments	20	40	
Breaking the Vicious Circle	10	42	
Self-Talk Inventory	3	44	
How to Become Number One	5	45	
Summary	2	46	
Closing Exercise	10	46	
	Total 180		
	(3 hours)		

Module 3 - *Communicating Clearly*

Agenda	Time (Minutes)	Page#	Facilitator
Introduction	2	47	
Warm-up	10	48	
Providing a Feelings Vocabulary	15	49	
Identifying Feelings	25	50	
Identifying Statements of Emotion	10	52	
Recognizing Emotion in Body Language	15	53	
Break	15		
Body Language and Congruent Communication	10	55	
Encouraging/Discouraging Body Language	30	57	
Listening and Perception Checking	20	58	
Assertive Communication	28	60	
	Total 180		
	(3 hours)		

Module 4 - *Am I Like Cinderella?*

Agenda	Time (Minutes)	Page#	Facilitator
Introduction	2	64	
A Woman's Place	13	65	
Women Are...Men Are...	20	67	
If I Was A Man, I Would...	20	68	
Break	15		
The Role of Fairytales	35	69	
The Role of the Media	40	72	
Attitudes and Opinions: Where Do They Come From?	25	74	
Closing Exercise	10	77	
	Total 180		
	(3 hours)		

Module 5 - *Where Do I Go From Here?*

Agenda	Time (Minutes)	Page#	Facilitator
Introduction	2	78	
Values	23	79	
Fantasies About Myself	25	81	
Examining Your Values and Goals	25	82	
Break	20		
Values: Choosing, Prizing, Acting	15	84	
Goal Setting	60	85	
Autobiography in Five Short Chapters	10	91	
Total	180		
(3 hours)			

Module 6 - *Managing My Life*

Agenda	Time (Minutes)	Page#	Facilitator
Introduction	2	92	
What Is A Family	30	93	
Exploring the Concept of Stress	23	95	
Handling Stress	15	97	
Reducing Stress	30	99	
Break	15		
Forming the Bridge	15	105	
Meet the New Me!	20	106	
Evaluation	15	107	
Closing Exercise	15	108	
Total	180		
(3 hours)			

MODULE 1 - *This Is Where I Start!*

WORKSHOP OVERVIEW

Purpose:

- to introduce facilitators to the participants
- to provide an overview of the workshop's purpose, objectives and agenda
- to attend to 'housekeeping' details
- to 'set the stage' in a way that is comfortable, enthusiastic, and non-threatening

Time: 20 Minutes

Materials:

- background music
- refreshments, such as tea, coffee, juice and cookies are appreciated by participants
- wall displays of posters and positive sayings where possible
- suitable posters, brochures etc., where possible, to be picked up by participants
- notepads, folders, pencils, etc. for participants' use

Process:

- Welcome participants
- explain that the material discussed in this workshop will be kept confidential
- provide information about workshop times, and dates
- discuss the child care arrangements which are provided for participant's convenience
- identify washrooms and facilities

- arrange smoke and coffee breaks

- stress the need for attendance, yet emphasize that each day's material will stand on it's own, so that while it is useful and valuable information, difficulty with attending one module will not affect the participant's ability to understand the following module's material

- explain the **objectives** of the workshop:

  - to provide participants with the necessary groundwork for career-planning

  - to help develop a positive sense of who they are, and the confidence to help them imagine good things for their life

  - to help begin to decide where they want to go next in life

  - to explore some verbal communication skills

  - to improve planning and decision-making skills of participants

  - to encourage their sense of independence

  - to help participants understand the impact of sex-role stereotyping (the lessons they have been taught about who they should be, and what is appropriate for girls to do or be or say) on their goal-setting

  - to improve the skills of participants, in juggling their responsibilities for raising kids and building their own careers

  - to form a link with available community resources for career and life planning

- explain the **topics** covered in each module of the workshop:

  Module 1 - *This Is Where I Start!*
  - an introduction to the other members of the group, introductory exercises, and determining the direction of the workshop

  Module 2 - *Self-Esteem: Feeling Good About Myself!*
  - how to notice, build on and maintain their understanding of what they like about themselves

  Module 3 - *Communicating Clearly*
  - building on their skills in speaking and listening effectively

  Module 4 - *Am I Like Cinderella?*
  - messages and myths in their lives

Module 5 - *Where do I Go From Here?*
- what do they value and how do they plan their future around their values?

Module 6 - *Managing My Life*
- stress management in their lives

Considerations:

- Workshops, new situations, new people and change can be frightening experiences. Affirm that some nervousness at the beginning of a workshop is natural.
- Explain that this workshop is not like a traditional school day: there is not much lecturing and no testing or right or wrong answers! The workshop is composed of activities which are done in large groups or in twos or threes, or as individual exercises. The activities are designed to increase the skills of participants in handling situations they would encounter on a day-to-day basis.
- State that no one will be forced to participate beyond the level of their comfort.
- Affirm that you will do everything possible to make this workshop a safe and comfortable place to be.
- Explain that the direction of the workshop will be determined by the group, the facilitator will ensure that essential material is covered.
- State that should participants wish to talk to someone individually, private conversations or counselling can be arranged.

INTRODUCTION:

Now that you have been introduced to the workshop as a whole, it's time to focus on the first module. For the rest of the morning we will introduce each of us to each other by participating in a variety of exercises. We hope these exercises will increase your comfort with each other to a level where we can feel safe when we discuss ideas. We will also dream a little about the ways we would like our lives to be, and spend some time practicing thinking positively about ourselves.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Purpose:

- to introduce participants to each other
- to provide participants with practice in talking about themselves
- to provide each participant with an opportunity to speak before the group by introducing another participant

Time: 23 minutes

Materials: none

Process:

- ask the participants to find a partner.
- introduce the idea that many of us have a story behind one or more of our names - how a name was chosen, some history about our last name, or perhaps a story about a nickname or a name you would have preferred to have been given. To further explain the concept, tell a story about your own name as an example.
- have each participant tell a story about one of her names to her partner.
- have each participant, with the help of her partner, invent a 'namesign'. Ask each participant to think of a series of physical movements that can be made with her hands that would fit the number of syllables in her name, or a series of physical movements that would fit the sound of her name. For instance, the name Pat could be illustrated with a 'pat' motion. The name Stacey could be illustrated with an upheld hand indicating 'stay', followed by a rolling motion of the hand mimicking the sea. Other names can be illustrated with motions mimicking the rhythm of the syllables. The facilitator should demonstrate a namesign she has invented for herself, as an example.
- have each participant introduce her partner, tell the story of her partner's name, and demonstrate her partner's namesign.

Considerations:

- Speaking in front of a group of peers can be a very fearful thing. It seems to be easier to introduce someone else than to introduce yourself. Once each participant has made the initial attempt to speak in front of the group, the participants will become more comfortable.

Adapted from: Hart, Lois B. ***Saying Hello: Getting Your Group Started.*** Organization Design and Development Inc., King of Prussia, PA, 1989.

HUMAN TREASURES

Purpose:

- to encourage conversation among participants
- to develop each participant's confidence by encouraging participants to circulate around the room, thus establishing a feeling of ownership of the space, while discussing topics that are relatively non-threatening.

Time: 10 minutes

Materials:

- copies of Handout #1 **Human Treasures Exercise**, pencils

Process:

- ask participants to collect the signature of a person from the group that meets the criteria of each line on the form.
- have participants try to talk to everyone in the group in an attempt to meet everyone before getting one person to sign in two places.

Considerations:

- Participants may not find anyone to correspond to each space but we hope they have fun trying.
- Some groups are more comfortable with crossing the room and meeting others if the facilitator leaves the room during this exercise.
- Standing up and moving from a safe chair can be another difficult step in developing confidence. Participants are usually talking and laughing with each other when you return to the room.

HUMAN TREASURES EXERCISE

In this exercise, find some of the "Human Treasures" in the room by collecting a signature from someone who fits the description of the first statement below. Find out all about how that statement fits them. Then go on and find someone that fits the second statement. Find out all about it. Continue on collecting signatures. Try to meet everyone once to collect their signature before you collect a signature from someone twice.

_____ Someone who is an only child.

_____ Someone who has been to Calgary in the past year.

_____ Someone who was not born in Alberta.

_____ Someone who has a child in school

_____ Someone who has a dog or a cat.

_____ Someone who always wanted to be a cheerleader.

_____ Someone who likes to do arts or crafts.

_____ Someone whose best asset is her smile.

_____ Someone who is an aunt.

WHAT'S IN YOUR POCKET OR PURSE?

Purpose:

- to provide practice in speaking about oneself.
- to provide an opportunity to speak before the group.
- to learn about other participants.

Time: 20 minutes

Materials:

- a special or significant object that a participant would carry in her pocket or purse.

Process:

- have the participants form a circle with their chairs.
- ask the participants to select an article from their pockets or purses that represents something or someone they are proud of or is special to them.
- ask the participants to share with the group why they selected that particular item and what it represents to them (i.e. photographs of family members, keys to the car or apartment, a child's toy, an emergency diaper for a child, etc.)
- start by sharing your own item.
- continue around the circle until everyone has had a chance to share their item.

Considerations:

- Many of the important items that are being shared are items relating to the participant's family. From this exercise participants will begin to see similarities among themselves.

Adapted from: Hart, Lois B. ***Saying Hello: Getting Your Group Started.*** Organization Design and Development Inc., King of Prussia, PA, 1989.

I KNOW...I NEED TO KNOW ...

Purpose:

- to outline the information that participants would like to know about juggling kids and careers.

Time: 30 minutes

Materials:

- flipchart paper, felt markers

Introduction:

During the preceding exercise "What's In Your Pocket or Purse", it became very clear that your children are very important parts of your lives.

Thinking of planning for a career probably causes you some anxiety as you wonder how are you going to do it all: balance a job, motherhood, the needs of family and friends, and your own personal needs. In this exercise, you will work in small groups to determine what "you need to know" about balancing all of these roles, and equally important, to determine what "you already know" about this balance.

Process:

- divide group into threes or fours, and provide each small group with flipchart paper and a marker or two.
- have the groups choose someone to be the recorder.
- have the groups divide their pages into two categories "What I Know" and "What I Need to Know", and ask them to write down everything that each one of them knows about how to balance many roles, and everything that each one of them needs to know about balancing a job, motherhood, the needs of family and friends and personal needs.
- have each paper taped to the wall, and a spokesperson from each group read out the lists that were developed along with any details that they would like to include.
- confirm for the group based on the lists, the topics that you as the facilitator had planned to cover in the next sessions. Negotiate the topics that could quickly be included in the next sessions, and the topics that will not be covered.

Considerations:

- facilitator might leave the room for the first part of this exercise to allow participants to take control of the exercise and the room.

Adapted from: Hart, Lois B. ***Saying Hello: Getting Your Group Started.*** Organization Design and Development Inc., King of Prussia, PA, 1989.

IDEAL WORKING SITUATION

Purpose:

- to encourage participants to think creatively about themselves and their futures.
- to encourage personal participation in discussions.
- to hear different perceptions about work and barriers.
- to recognize that all barriers are not equal.

Time: 25 minutes

Materials:

- writing paper, pencils or pens
- flipchart paper, felt markers

Process:

Part I: Ideal Working Situation:

- read from the attached script. Pace the speed of your reading: slow enough to allow participants to write about each idea, fast enough to avoid having participants "think" and analyze their responses as they are writing.
- after reading the script, ask the participants to spend a few moments thinking about the three words that were used to describe them in their ideal working situation. (see script) Then ask them to slowly change the position of their body, to the way they would be were they in that ideal working situation right now, with those adjectives being used about them, and with those feelings.
- give participants a moment to come back to the present.
- ask participants to note what they experienced when they were feeling good about themselves and how that changes the way they presented themselves to the world.
- spend a few minutes sharing the feelings of the moment and holding on to the positive atmosphere.

Script:

"Our fantasies, hopes and dreams for ourselves are often the best predictors of what our future occupational choices and directions will be. In this exercise, you will be asked to use your imagination as a resource, to create for yourself an "ideal" working situation.

Take out a couple of clean sheets of paper and a pencil or pen. Relax. Take a few deep breaths. Get comfortable.

You are going to begin to create a word picture - a spontaneous description of what your own ideal situation would be - one in which you are making money. This is your own individual ideal working situation.

Suspend all judgments, suspend all thoughts about practicalities. It's not important that you think about whether or not it's possible to fit your ideal working situation into your real life. Just let your imagination run free...and begin to write.

As you write, I will operate as a radio in the background. You can tune me in or out as you please. Don't worry about missing parts of what I say.

Just write down the first things that come to your mind. Spelling, grammar, punctuation, finishing sentences - none of these things matter. The idea is to simply create an image, a picture, using words of your own ideal working situation.

O.K., let's begin.

Where are you in your ideal working situation? Geographically, are you on the east coast, west coast, north, south, central, a combination? Do you travel?

You are now beginning the day...you are arriving at your ideal situation. What time is it? Do you unlock your own door...Are others there already? How are you greeted?

What is your environment like? Are you indoors...outdoors? Try to create a visual picture of your physical surroundings...What is around you? What are the colours? What kinds of things? What are the large objects in your environment...the small objects?

If you're inside a building, what's outside your window? What are your outside surroundings like? Are there trees...other buildings? What are the sounds?

Where are you? Are you sitting...standing...moving around...still? What are you wearing...what kind of clothes? How do you appear to other people? What comments do people make about your dress...your appearance?

What are you doing in your ideal situation...what activities? What parts of you are you using...head...voice...heart...hands...legs...your whole body? What kinds of information are you working with? What kinds of materials? What kinds of people are you working with?

What kinds of things are you responsible for? What are the services you perform...for whom do you perform them?

In what ways are you contributing? What kinds of problems are you called upon to solve...to help deal with...to clarify? What kinds of problems do people come to you for help with? What kinds of advice are people asking you for? What is your main value...the biggest thing you have to offer...or to contribute?

What are the people in your ideal working situation like? Your colleagues? What do they do? What kinds of things are you and these people talking about...What's the conversation like? What is your role in relation to these people.. boss.. manager.. leader.. co-worker.. team member.. employer.. colleague.. advisor.. friend? How are people acting toward you...what is their attitude toward you?

A newspaper reporter is interviewing people in your ideal working situation who think highly of you...What are they saying about you? What are their feelings about you?

What are three words these people who think very highly of you would use to describe you in your ideal working situation?

What are three feelings you have about yourself in this ideal working situation?

Source: Unknown.

Part II: Exploring the Barriers Exercise

- in small groups after the script, have participants brainstorm the barriers that would prevent a person from getting into an ideal work situation.
- emphasize that these barriers need not be something they have experienced personally, but can be.
- reassure participants that there are no right or wrong answers for this exercise.
- in small groups have the participants prioritize the barriers, and decide which would be the top four barriers that would make it most difficult for them to get into an ideal work situation i.e. lack of education, lack of child care, fear of being independent, lack of support from family, poor self-esteem, etc.
- point out that most of these issues will be addressed during the next sessions.

Considerations:

- Recognize that making a change in one's life can be frightening.
- Direct the discussion of barriers towards some barriers being the result of decisions made earlier in life.
- There may be emotions expressed about the participant's perceptions of control - being in control, being controlled, and the fairness or unfairness of life.

MY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Purpose:

- to practice thinking positively about oneself.
- to practice speaking positively about oneself before a group.

Time: 15 minutes

Materials:

- flipchart paper, felt markers

Process:

- pass out flip chart paper and markers to all participants and to group facilitators.
- have everyone write down, and illustrate if they want to, two things that they do well, or two things they are proud of having accomplished in their lives.
- ask each person to describe these accomplishments to the group.
- head the flip charts with names and tape them to the wall.
- ask participants how it feels to think about their achievements or accomplishments.
- lead the discussion into whether or not we tend to think positively about what we do or accomplish, or whether instead, we tend to focus on what we do badly/poorly.
- whenever the participants become aware of other achievements or more things they do well or are proud of, they can add these to the list on the wall. These do not have to be major achievements, they can be situations handled well, or happy conversations that they had.

Considerations:

- As a society, we tend to more easily accept hearing people tell stories about themselves that illustrate how badly they do something, what a terrible day they had, or the problems they are currently involved in. We view telling a positive story about oneself as an act of bragging, or being 'too big for our boots'. This exercise provides an opportunity to practice thinking positively about oneself, and to share those positive thoughts, without being accused of bragging.

CLOSING EXERCISE

Purpose:

- to provide a structured close to the introductory session.

Time: 20 minutes

Materials: none

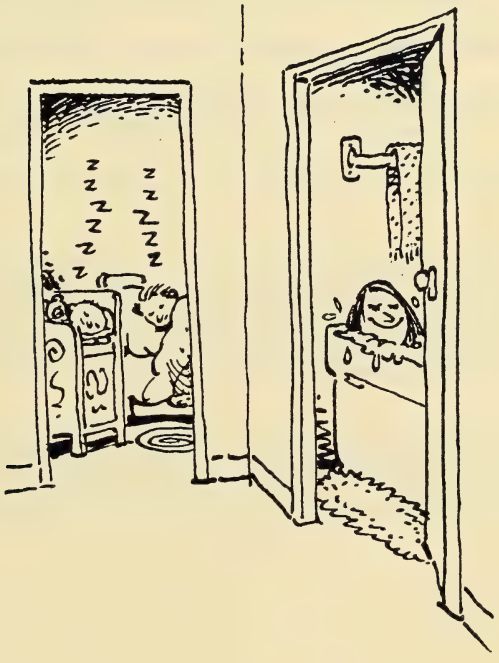
Process:

- have participants form a circle.
- ask each participant in turn to tell the group about an enjoyable moment they experienced in this first module.

MODULE 2 - *Self-Esteem: Feeling Good About Myself!*

Introduction:

Do you find that one day you like yourself a lot better than the next day? Have you ever been delighted by the way you handled something, and then in the next moment decide that, in truth, you never do anything right? In this module we will explore processes that produce these differences in how we value ourselves, and discuss techniques that will enable us to achieve and maintain a more consistent value of ourselves.



Considerations:

- It is imperative that the participants not be labelled as naturally having low self-esteem but that the facilitator emphasize the importance of a continually improving self-esteem and that everyone can occasionally use a boost to their self-esteem.
- Only a few self-esteem exercises should be used, and adequate time should be given to process and personalize each one.
- Be sensitive to individual feelings. Some women may be getting in touch with both positive and negative feelings about themselves.

Theory:

One way that **self-esteem** can be defined is **the value that we place on ourselves.** This value is developed from our past experiences, our successes and failures, and is strongly influenced by those who have been significant in our development. The amount of value we give ourselves is directly related to our ability to achieve a sense of satisfaction with our lives. As our self-esteem rises, so does our ability to place ourselves in situations where we will seek out and achieve positive rewards - in fact to allow ourselves opportunities where we can succeed.

There are basically three ways to raise our self-esteem:

1) through respect and approval from significant others

2) through achievement and success, building on a secure knowledge of our limitations and competencies and uniqueness

3) through acceptance of our own inner nature, trusting our own decisions

Exercises that are designed to build self-esteem in participants are based on the idea that human beings are self-defining: we set our own limits for ourselves based on our view of ourselves and the value we give ourselves. Providing a situation where we can enhance our feelings of personal value will provide an opportunity for growth of self-esteem.

Adapted from: Kampf, Rachel, ed. ***Discovering Life Skills, Vol. II and Vol. IV.*** Y.W.C.A. of Metropolitan Toronto, Toronto, Canada, 1976.

WARM-UP

Purpose:

- to allow participants to recap what was said and/or done in the first module
- to continue the process of enhancement of individual self-esteem

Time: 13 minutes

Materials: none

Process:

- have participants work in pairs.
- ask participants to pretend that their partner was away for the first module, and to describe to each other what had happened and the activities in which they participated.
- bring participants back to the main group and discuss anything that has arisen from their recap.
- to bring them back to the present, ask them to each describe to the group the "colour" they are feeling right now.

Considerations:

- The "colour" a participant uses to describe herself is often a reflection of the way she is feeling. Asking a participant to describe the colour she is feeling provides an opportunity for her to get in touch with her feelings and to express herself in a safe manner.
- The facilitator's ability to handle any kind of emotion or judgement is being observed by participants. Your comfort level with emotions and your use of a positive approach will directly influence the comfort level of participants when you ask them to reveal their feelings or reactions to issues later in the workshop.

MY DECLARATION OF SELF-ESTEEM

Purpose:

- to provide a positive introduction to the topic of self-esteem
- to affirm the special uniqueness of each individual

Time: 5 minutes

Materials:

- copies of Handout #2 **My Declaration of Self-Esteem**

Process:

- hand out copies and read or ask a volunteer to read the copy aloud.
- ask the following questions:
  Which statement appealed to you most, and why?
  What does this declaration say to you about your uniqueness?

Handout #2

MY DECLARATION OF SELF-ESTEEM

I am me.

In all the world, there is no one else exactly like me. There are persons who have some parts like me, but no one adds up exactly like me. Therefore, everything that comes out of me is authentically mine because I alone chose it.

I own everything about me--my body, including everything it does, including all its thoughts and ideas; my eyes, including the images of all they behold; my feelings, whatever they may be--anger, joy, frustration, love, disappointment, excitement; my mouth, and all the words that come out of it, polite, sweet or rough, correct or incorrect; my voice, loud or soft; and all my actions, whether they be to others or to myself.

I own my fantasies, my dreams, my hopes, my fears.

I own all my triumphs and successes, all my failures and mistakes.

Because I own all of me, I can become intimately acquainted with me. By so doing I can love and be friendly with me in all parts. I can then make it possible for all of me to work in my best interests.

I know there are aspects about myself that puzzle me, and other aspects that I do not know. But as long as I am friendly and loving to myself, I can courageously and hopefully look for the solutions to the puzzles and for ways to find out more about me.

However I look and sound, whatever I say and do, and whatever I think and feel at a given moment in time is me. This is authentic and represents where I am at that moment in time.

When I review later how I looked and sounded, what I said and did, and how I thought and felt, some parts may turn out to be unfitting. I can discard that which is unfitting, and keep that which proved fitting, and invent something new for that which I discarded.

I can see, hear, feel, think, say, and do. I have the tools to survive, to be close to others, to be productive, and to make sense and order out of the world of people and things outside of me.

I own me, and therefore I can engineer me.

I am me and I am okay.

By Virginia Satir

Source: Satir, Virginia. ***Self Esteem.*** Celestial Arts, Berkley, CA., 1975.

THE "POT" EXERCISE

Purpose:

- to provide a visual and group-defined definition of self-esteem

Time: 15 minutes

Materials:

- two transparent pots or pitchers suitable for pouring liquids
- water
- food colouring
- a surface on which coloured water can be inadvertently spilled

Process:

- tint water with food colouring so it is visible and put the coloured water in one pot or pitcher.
- ask the following questions: *what is self-esteem? where does it come from? how does it get raised or lowered?* When a few tentative definitions come forth, begin to demonstrate self-esteem with the pots and water.
- suggest that the empty pot represents the vessel inside us, whatever it looks like, that holds our feelings both positive and negative about ourselves.
- ask the questions *how much self-esteem are we born with?* From the pot with water, pour in a token amount. *That much?*
- ask the question *as small babies, what circumstances, events or achievements affect the way we feel about ourselves?* For a positive event, add a little water for a negative event, pour a little back into the other pot.
- ask the question *as a toddler what circumstances, events or achievements affect the way we feel about ourselves? as a small child? a 7 year old, 10 year old, young teen, middle teen, late teen, young adult?...etc.*
- go quickly through the life cycle, adding and subtracting water as appropriate - have some fun with this.

- summarize with,
  What is Self-esteem?
  Where does it come from?
  What kinds of things would raise or lower self-esteem? i.e. approval from significant others, achievement and success, self-acceptance
  Who affects our self-esteem? What happens when we depend upon others for our feelings of self-worth?
  How might your level of self-esteem affect your ability to plan for the future?

Considerations:

- Groups vary greatly in their ability to respond to the above questions. Take adequate time to process each question that you pose. It would be better to adequately discuss some questions then to rush through all questions.

Adapted from: Satir, Virginia. ***Peoplemaking.*** Science and Behavior Books Inc., Palo Alto, CA., 1972.

BRAG SESSION

Purpose:

- to explore the reasons why women find it difficult to say positive things about themselves
- to define the difference between honesty and bragging

Time: 25 minutes

Materials:

- flipchart paper, felt markers

Process:

- outline the rules of brainstorming.
- divide the group into small groups of three or four, and provide paper and markers.
- ask each group to brainstorm all the words they can think of that they associate with the word "brag".
- ask each group to share their list.
- discuss the meaning of "brag", and the difference between bragging and saying positive things about oneself.
- discuss the acceptability of talking about oneself in a generally positive way, and the degree of difficulty they would have in saying positive things about themselves or about saying positive things about someone else.
- in a round, ask participants to share one positive word or phrase about themselves.

Adapted from: Szirom, Tricia. ***Greater Expectations: A Sourcebook for Working With Girls and Young Women.*** Learning Development Aids. Cambs, England, 1988.

MENTAL SABOTAGE TO POSITIVE SELF-ESTEEM

Purpose:

- explore how we contribute to our own negative self-esteem, through negative self-talk
- to personalize this concept by turning the suggested negative self-talk statements into positive self-talk statements

Time: 30 minutes

Materials:

- copies of Handout #3 **Mental Sabotage to Positive Self- Esteem**

Introduction:

Have you ever noticed a sort of one-sided conversation that is going on in your head? When you become aware of this 'little voice' you begin to recognize how often that little voice tells you about 'judgement calls' you make about your 'performance', as you go on with your day. It's almost as though you have a miniature audience somewhere in a corner of your head, booing or applauding your accomplishments. Is there anyone who is not familiar with this 'little voice?'

It seems that the 'little voice' (we'll call it "self-talk") is more likely to provide criticism than praise, and as we've just discovered, an abundance of criticism from the person who loves us best, ourselves, does not help us to maintain a high amount of self-esteem. As well, negative self-talk can be unrealistic and a habit. So we may need to learn how to stop the negative self-talk, or change it into more esteem-building positive self-talk. One way of handling negative self-talk is to respond back to it with an emphatic (although silent) "NO!" Don't accept such nonsense! In the following exercise, we'll discuss some patterns of negative self-talk, and ask you to turn them around into positive, self-esteem building self-talk.

Process:

- discuss each of the negative self-talk methods reflected on Handout # 3. After each method, have the participants write their own responses to the questions given. Take some time to discuss everyone's response to some of the statements.

MENTAL SABOTAGE TO POSITIVE SELF - ESTEEM

Do any of these negative self-talk methods sound familiar? After each method, practice developing positive, self-esteem building statements.

1. Discounting the good things about me:

"Well, I guess I'm smart, but so what?"

Write a statement that values a good point about you, (give yourself a pat on the back)!

2. Telling myself I *should* be able to do it, and comparing myself to others:

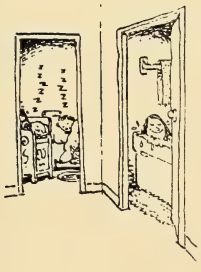
"I should be able to handle being a mother, going to school, and having a job at the same time. Everyone else can."

What is a "should" that you tell yourself?
How does your "should" put you down?
How can you build yourself up instead?

3. Putting myself down by giving myself negative labels:

"I'm just an overweight, unattractive, worthless..."

What are two positive points about you that you can focus on?



4. **Minimizing my good points, and magnifying my bad points, often by including a "but" or "however" in the statement:**

"Well, I'm a pretty good typist (90 WPM), but I'm one of the world's worst spellers."

What are two of your best skills?

5. **Being responsible for everyone and everything, but putting myself last:**

"I'd love to go back to school, but who would do all the cooking, cleaning, laundry and shopping? Besides, I have to type all my husband's papers and drive the kids to dance class and hockey practice, and after all that I just don't have time for me."

Think of a situation where you could put your needs first, hopefully once a day. What is the need that you would be meeting?

6. **Expecting the worst to happen to me:**

"My home life is so upsetting, I *know* I won't do well at school."

What is the best thing that ever happened to you? What achievements or pleasures can you look forward to in the next year?

7. **Comparing myself to someone, and never being as good:**

"My meat loaf is never as good as my mother's."

Who do you compare yourself to?
When you compare yourself to someone do you put yourself down? If so, please reread Handout #2, "My Declaration of Self-Esteem".

Adapted from: Wilson, Linda. ***Discover: An Educational Opportunity for Women in Transition.*** The Women's Resource Center. Sarasota, Florida, 1987.

LOW SELF-ESTEEM VICIOUS CIRCLE

Purpose:

- to demonstrate how negative feelings about ourselves reinforce themselves and are self-perpetuating

Time: 10 minutes

Materials:

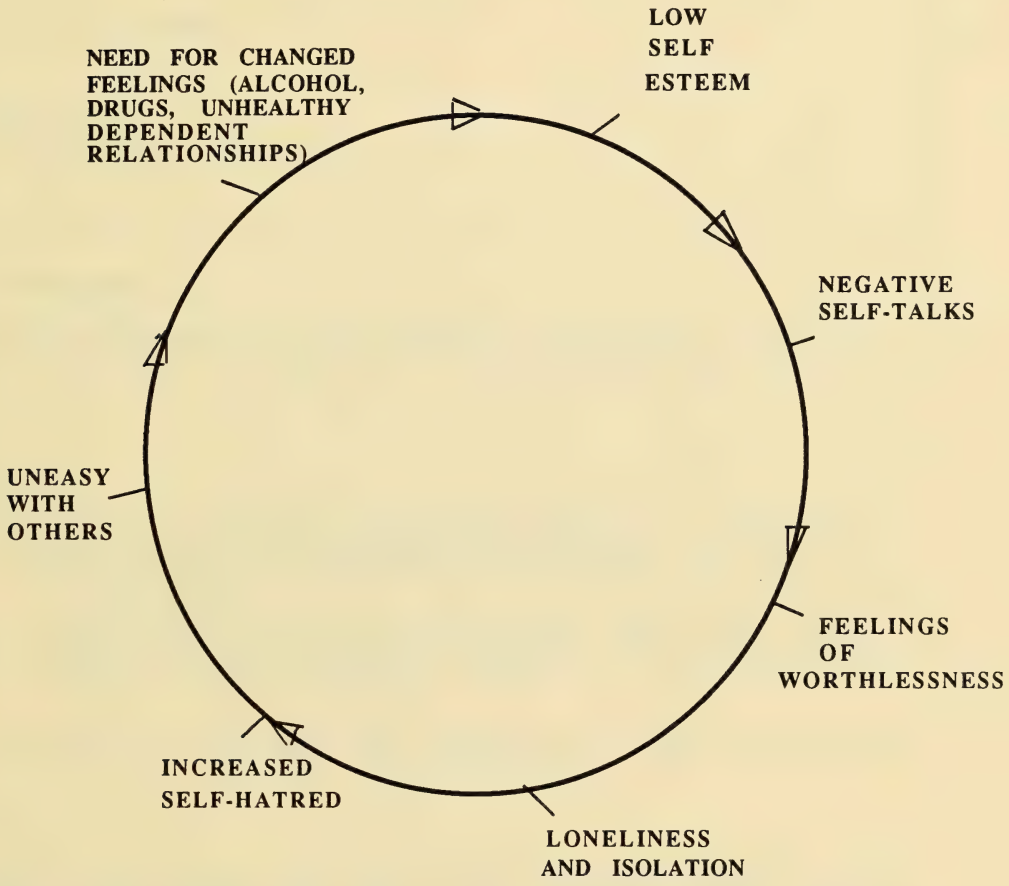
- flipchart paper, felt markers

Process:

- see the next page for a diagram of the low self - esteem vicious circle which illustrates that once we begin to think badly about ourselves, we compound the problem with other behaviors.
- draw this circle on a flipchart or board.
- begin describing how this process works by starting at the point in the circle "negative self-talk", which was just discussed in the previous exercise "Mental Sabotage to Positive Self-Esteem".
- continue around the circle discussing each component.
- save the flipchart for use in a later exercise.

LOW SELF-ESTEEM VICIOUS CIRCLE

Mental sabotage leads to a self-perpetuating cycle that is difficult to break. Have there been times in your own experience when you were stuck in a vicious circle?



Adapted from: Wilson, Linda. ***Discover: An Educational Opportunity for Women in Transition.*** The Women's Resource Center. Sarasota, Florida, 1987.

INCREASING SELF-ESTEEM

Purpose:

- to demonstrate that low self-esteem can be developed into higher self-esteem when esteem building skills are used

Time : 15 minutes

Materials:

- flipchart paper, felt markers

Introduction:

One of the advantages of getting together in a group like this is that we can become resources for each other by providing ideas about what works well for us.

Process:

- brainstorm a list of positive things that we do/could do to increase our self-esteem (particularly looking for low/no cost ideas) i.e.
  - writing positives on a card to carry around with us, and maybe getting others to add to it
  - a jar with slips of paper with rewards inside - reach inside and get a reward - 15 minutes off to absorb sunshine, to sit and listen to music, to walk, to exercise, to nap, etc.
- ask *when can we use these ideas? Should we wait to use them only when we feel down? What about scheduled "self" times?*

Adapted from: Wilson, Linda. ***Discover: An Educational Opportunity for Women in Transition.*** The Women's Resource Center. Sarasota, Florida, 1987.

COMPLIMENTS

Purpose:

- to practice receiving compliments without discounting what others say.

Time: 20 minutes

Materials: none

Introduction:

It is widely accepted that any attention one is given is better than receiving no attention at all. Think of children. If they can't attract your attention in an acceptable way, they'll attract your attention any way they can.

Humans need attention. ***Attention,*** *in the form of both touch and communication* ***is necessary for survival.*** *Positive attention is preferred!*

It is useful to differentiate between conditional and unconditional attention. What's the difference between "I like you" and "I love you?" The first is conditional based on an appreciation for the way you are or behave or act. The second, "I love you" is unconditional, not based on your behaviour, but based on a positive regard for the way you are.

Giving positive conditional attention or compliments is an important skill. Receiving compliments gracefully is an equally important skill in building self-esteem in yourself and in others.

Process:

Part I - Delivering A Compliment

- ask participants to ask themselves the following questions:

  If I were to give you a compliment and I wanted it to be a compliment you would really accept,
  - *what would I say?*
  - *how would I say it?*
  - *what qualities about me would I need to have for the compliment to be believable?*
  - *what other circumstances / situations would be beneficial?*

- develop examples of compliments that would meet the participants' criteria for believable compliments.

Part II - Responding To A Compliment

- *just as there are skills involved in delivering a compliment, there are also skills involved in receiving compliments. People who are uncomfortable receiving a compliment might "discount" the compliment by belittling the compliment and the giver. Examples of this might be:*
  "This old thing?!?"
  "You must be crazy!"
  "You've got to be kidding!"
  "It doesn't take a genius to do that!"
  *"Thank you, **but**...."*

- *how could we respond to a compliment without discounting it?*

- have participants form groups of two. Ask each participant to take a turn complimenting her partner, and the other to receive the compliment without discounting what was said.

- ask the participants the following questions:
  Is it difficult to receive a compliment without discounting it?
  How does a sincere compliment affect your self-esteem?

Adapted from: Peltier, Wanda Joe. ***Displaced Homemakers: Vo-Tech Workshop Guide***. Women's Resource Center Inc. Norman, Oklahoma, 1981.

BREAKING THE VICIOUS CIRCLE

Purpose:

- to demonstrate that the low self-esteem vicious circle can be broken

Time: 10 minutes

Materials:

- flipchart diagram from the earlier exercise "Low Self-Esteem Vicious Circle"
- flipchart paper, felt markers

Process:

- bring out the flipchart diagram you developed earlier in the exercise "Low Self-Esteem Vicious Circle."
- using a different colour of marker, refer to the attached diagram "Breaking the Vicious Circle," and working with the group's suggestions, write in remedies to help "break" the low self-esteem vicious circle.

BREAKING THE VICIOUS CIRCLE

As you break out of the vicious circle, try to become aware of your own personal power as a worthwhile woman whose positive self-esteem glows from within.

Adapted from: Wilson, Linda. ***Discover: An Educational Opportunity for Women in Transition.*** Women's Resource Center Inc. Sarasota, Florida, 1987.

SELF-TALK INVENTORY

Purpose:

- to reinforce concepts learned
- to personalize concepts by listening to self-talk

Time: 3 minutes (homework assignment)

Materials: none

Process:

- ask participants to listen for their self-talk overnight, and write down examples of their own personal self-talk.
- ask them to make a conscious effort to replace negative self-talk with positive self-talk and to applaud themselves when they hear positive self-talk.

Adapted from: Wilson, Linda. ***Discover: An Educational Opportunity for Women in Transition.*** The Women's Resource Center Inc. Sarasota, Florida, 1987.

Handout #3

HOW TO BECOME NUMBER ONE WITH YOURSELF AND OTHERS

There is only one you. There is no one in the entire world to equal you, to match your fingerprints, to match your voice, to match your features or to match your personality. You are an original in the fullest sense of the word. You are Number One, and now that you know it, your job is to reinforce that fact in your conscious and subconscious mind everyday.

Some steps for liking yourself:

1) *Never do anything, anywhere, that you would be ashamed of.*
2) *Don't be afraid to give yourself a pat on the back now and then.*
3) *Live your life in such a way that you'd be glad to have yourself for a friend.*

Get rid of negative thoughts about yourself and about others. There are many kinds of people in the world and throughout your life - you will meet them, work with them - how you feel about yourself will be reflected in your relations with others.

Think of the package you present to others both as to the contents and the wrapping. Ideally, contents and wrapping go hand in hand. The contents are what you are inside: the personality that shines through your eyes, the smile on your face, the words that express your thoughts and ideas, your readiness to listen, your enthusiasm, your attitude and outlook.

The wrapping of the package is your outward appearance: the posture you have, your grooming, your complexion, your weight, the clothes you wear and how you wear them and the shoes you walk in.

The wrapping of the package, your image, reflects the qualities you wish to show others.

Ways to ensure that your contents and wrapping are in good condition:

- *meet new people*
- *keep promises, make promises that you can keep*
- *the greatest gift God ever gave to a human being is a smile, wear one*
- *do things that will gladden the hearts of others*
- *exercise your sense of humour*
- *put forth a little extra effort, reach out*

The whole secret of life, is to know what you want, to write it down and commit yourself to accomplishing it.

Adapted From: B.C. Native Women's Society. ***The Native Woman: Existing or Living.***

CLOSING EXERCISE

Purpose:

- to provide a structured close to the day
- to provide an opportunity for the facilitator to focus on each individual

Time: 10 minutes

Materials: none

Summary - Self-Esteem

By doing favourite activities and being around people we enjoy, we can increase our self-esteem. If we wear the clothes we like, do the things we like, are in places and with people we like, chances are we will feel good about ourselves. It is useful to be aware of these things, especially when we need a lift, and especially when we plan to make changes in our lives, or to set goals for ourselves.

Process:

- go around the group and ask each participant what "colour" they are now?
- then in a sharing circle, have each participant complete the following statement: "I feel _____ about today, and I hope for _____ tomorrow."

MODULE 3 - *Communicating Clearly*

INTRODUCTION:

Good verbal communication is a mixture of good speaking and listening skills, and good perception checking skills. Unlike the many years of reading and writing that educators provided in schools, there was not as much emphasis placed on developing verbal communication skills. Yet good verbal communication skills are very useful since we spend a great deal of time communicating verbally. Surprisingly, a very large part of communication is about emotions - how we feel about something.

The first part of this module on communication will focus on accurately identifying emotions, the latter part will focus on the skills of communicating.

WARM-UP EXERCISE

Purpose:

- to begin the day with a non-threatening exercise
- to encourage conversation and laughter

Time: 10 minutes

Materials: none

Process:

- arrange chairs in a circle.
- ask participants the following question:
  if you had a choice to be on earth as an animal, what animal would you be, and why?
- ask participants to share their responses with the group.

Considerations:

- Imagining oneself as a different animal, fish or bird allows one to identify with characteristics or physical traits that one values.

PROVIDING A FEELINGS VOCABULARY

Purpose :

- to provide a feelings word vocabulary, so that accuracy of communication can be improved

Time: 15 minutes

Materials:

- flipchart paper, felt markers

Introduction:

Although we all feel feelings (emotions), they can be difficult to accurately identify. Can you remember occasions when you weren't sure ***how*** *you felt? Some people find being able to accurately identify their emotions to be a useful skill. Some people believe that neither identifying emotions, nor having emotions is useful. These people attempt to deny their emotions any impact on their lives. To them emotions are simply painful.*

Nevertheless, our language is full of words that describe emotion.

Process:

- have participants brainstorm feeling words while you record on the flipchart their responses. Attempt to list as many feeling words as possible, no matter how similar, during the time limit. Post this chart on the wall for future reference. Add to the chart as more words continue to be identified during the remainder of the workshop.
- pose this question: *is it ever more easy to express certain feelings than others? In what situations?*

IDENTIFYING FEELINGS

Purpose:

- to identify personal feelings (emotions) that develop from different situations
- to identify the physical sensations that correspond with various emotions
- to discuss the purpose of

Time: 25 minutes

Material:

- copies of Handout #4 **Feeling Vignettes**

Process:

- break the participants into pairs.
- have participants first read the handout and then have them respond to each vignette. Ask them to name the emotional feeling they would experience, as well as describe what physical sensation would be associated with the emotional feeling i.e. where that physical sensation is located (in the pit of their stomach, in the back of their neck, etc.), and how the physical sensation actually feels (throbbing, tingling, etc.).
- have participants each make a note of the emotion, and the major physical sensations they would experience in a given situation.
- bring the responses back to the large group for comparisons of the different emotions that different people experience in the same situation, focusing on the physical sensation that corresponds with different emotions. These physical sensations are an important part of accurately identifying our emotions.
- discuss, *what is the purpose of emotions? What use are they?*

Handout #4

FEELING VIGNETTES

You wake up in the middle of the night and hear a strange noise...

You are rocking gently with a young child on your lap...

Your spouse is angry with you and becomes so upset and frustrated when you respond that he strides out, slamming the door so hard the house shakes...

Your teenager comes home from school and says "hello" with warmth and enthusiasm...

You have just spilled your drink on the carpet...

You discover your child has just shoplifted something...

The car in front of you is going 60 km per hour in an 80 km zone. There's no place to pass...

You overhear a friend gossiping with a third person about you...

You step on the scale...

You watch your child perform in a talent show...

The collection agency calls for the third time this week asking for payment on your bill...

A person you find attractive sits down next to you at the party...

You walk through the door on the first day of your new job...

A friend tells you what a wonderful person you are...

Adapted from: Tubesing, Nancy. ***Structured Exercises in Wellness Promotion.*** Whole Person Press. Duluth, MN., 1988.

IDENTIFYING STATEMENTS OF EMOTION

Purpose:

- to distinguish between a direct statement of emotions and an implied statement of emotion.

Time: 10 minutes

Materials: none

Process:

- explain that we receive some messages that clearly state the feeling that the sender is experiencing. These are considered to be direct statements of feeling: *I've just moved here from a large city, and I feel out of place and lonely.*
- ask participants *what are the content/facts of the statement?* (She has just moved here from a large city.)
- ask the participants *what are the feelings of the statement?* (lost/lonely).
- explain that other messages that we receive are less clear and require some decoding on our part to understand the feelings that are implied. Here is an example of an implied statement: *I've just moved here from the city. Everything is so different and I don't know anyone.*
- *What are the content/facts of this statement?* (She has just moved here from the city.)
- *What are the emotions that are implied?* (She may be feeling lost and lonely, or she may be very excited and happy.)
- To clearly understand her message, we would have to to be certain about her emotions, and we would have to have more information. How could we obtain more information, more clues, to help us clarify the emotional content of her message?

RECOGNIZING EMOTION IN BODY LANGUAGE

Purpose:

- to explore the impact of body language on communication
- to recognize that body language dramatically influences our communication
- to practice recognizing body language

Time: 15 minutes

Materials:

- envelope containing small pieces of paper with "emotions" words written on them.

Introduction:

Body language or non-verbal communication is how we communicate with others without using words. In fact, about 55% of our communication with others is non-verbal. How do we do this? We communicate with our eye contact, posture, the way we move, our facial expressions, the tenseness of our body, the way we are turned toward or away from the other.

There is also a component of body language known as the space bubble – how much distance is comfortable between two people. In other words, how comfortable am I with you, and how physically close to you can I get before I feel uncomfortable? For example, a good friend can stand quite close to you while you're talking whereas someone you just met who stood that close to you would probably make you feel as if he or she is invading your space

In this, and the next two exercises we will explore body language, or non-verbal communication techniques.

Process:

- from a prepared envelope, have participants draw a slip of paper on which a single emotion word has been written. Each participant does not tell anyone what is on that paper.
- ask for a volunteer. The volunteer will attempt to show through "sculpturing" or role-playing the emotion word that she has drawn out of the envelope. The other participants will try to guess what particular feeling or emotion the volunteer is sculpting. The participant who guesses will sculpture the next emotion word, and so on or until everyone has had an opportunity to sculpture.

Considerations:

- Try not to let anyone abstain from participating in this exercise since it will provide an opportunity to stand alone at the front of the group, which is important in the development of self-esteem.

BODY LANGUAGE AND CONGRUENT COMMUNICATION

Purpose:

- to identify congruent and incongruent non-verbal communication

Time: 10 minutes

Materials: none

Process:

- say to the group of participants *I'm not feeling uptight*, while using very uptight body language - tense shoulders, head tucked forward, furtive looks, arms crossed, tension and then ask, *do you believe me?*
- say *I'm really very interested in what you're saying*, but look away, cross your arms in front of you as though against the other person, sigh, and fiddle with a pencil, and then ask the following questions:
  - *does the verbal message match the information my body is sending?*
  - *what was my body saying?*
  - *which do you believe - the verbal message or the non-verbal message?*
- sculpture the same first two expressions with congruent body language and ask the following questions:
  - *does the verbal message match the information my body is sending?*
  - *the first examples were examples of **incongruent** communication. How clear was the message I was sending?*
  - *the second examples showed **congruent** communication. How clear was my message?*

- sit on a chair, scratch your head, and ask the following questions:

  - *why am I scratching my head?* Ensure that answers other than the obvious emerge. i.e.

    - itchy head
    - dandruff
    - fleas
    - sweaty scalp
    - uncertainty
    - forgetfulness
    - lying

  - *how clear was the message?*

- *since body language obviously has many meanings we can't depend on body language alone for our information. We must also know something about the context - the setting in which the communication is taking place. Body language takes place in context. People who are first studying body language often fall into the trap of studying the non-verbal communication out of context, and that sets them up for error. Body language is an important clue, but not the whole message.*

ENCOURAGING/DISCOURAGING BODY LANGUAGE

Purpose:

- to identify body language that encourages or discourages a person to talk
- to practice body language that encourages a conversation

Time: 30 minutes

Materials:

- flipchart paper, felt markers

Process:

- have the group form pairs. Have each pair sit back to back and try to communicate a message or tell a story to each other for two or three minutes.
- after enough time has elapsed for demonstrating the difficulty of communicating from this back-to-back position, have the participants turn their chairs around to face each other.
- have one person try to communicate a message, while the other person tries hard not to listen. Ask the person who is not listening to do anything she needs to do to show that she is not listening and to discourage the speaker. Have them switch roles. Discuss how this scenario feels to the person who is trying to communicate.
- then have one person try to communicate while the other person tries hard to listen. Have them switch roles. Discuss how each situation felt, how much they were able to communicate in each situation and what methods they used to discourage/encourage communication.
- break the group into pairs, and have them practise encouraging someone to talk while incorporating all of the encouraging behaviors that they can. Have them switch roles.
- ask the participants the following question: *In what ways can knowing more about body language be useful to you?*

LISTENING AND PERCEPTION CHECKING

Purpose:

- to practice listening
- to practice checking on what you think are the other person's emotions
- to practice communicating your own emotions clearly

Time: 20 minutes

Materials:

- flipchart paper, felt markers

Introduction:

You may have found that there were certain kinds of behaviors that you used when you were trying to really listen to someone: nodding, eye contact, encouraging sounds and phrases. These verbal and nonverbal encouragers are important behaviors of someone who is truly listening and trying to understand both the facts and the emotions behind a message. If you withhold these non-verbal and verbal encouragers, you may find that the person who is speaking to you will continue repeating her message until you indicate that, in fact, you understand.

Paraphrasing, or 'repeating back,' is a method of ensuring that you have heard the message correctly. Paraphrasing works to the advantage of both the speaker and the listener because it ensures that the messages are being understood. A paraphrasing statement is simply a reflection of what you think the other person meant and is feeling. It contains no judgement about the other person, it is simply a reflection: your way of knowing if you're hearing her message clearly.

To paraphrase her message, you might start your sentence with:
"I think I hear you saying...?" or
"Could it be that you are...?"
"Let me see if I understand what you are saying...?"
"Do you mean...?"
"I see/hear you doing/saying -------, and I wonder if you are feeling -------?"

Process:

- form a circle. Every other person in the circle will take a turn telling a personal story, and the person to her left will listen to her for a minute or two.
- explain that the listener will then try to paraphrase the thoughts and feelings of the speaker, using a previously mentioned phrase to start her paraphrase. If the listener rephrased the feelings of the speaker accurately, terrific. If not, ask the speaker to speak again until the listener hears her message accurately.
- give the other half of the group an opportunity to speak and to practice paraphrasing.
- ask the participants the following question: *how does it feel to be heard accurately / inaccurately?*

Considerations:

- It is important to remind everyone that this is not a contest. Emphasize that communication is the responsibility of both the sender and the receiver.

ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION

Purpose:

- to distinguish among non-assertive, assertive, and aggressive communication styles

Time: 28 minutes

Materials:

- flipchart paper, felt markers

Process:

- ask *what is assertiveness?*
- on flipchart paper, make a chart of behaviors associated with non-assertive communication, assertive communication and aggressive communication and ask participants to help fill in the chart.

	Eye Contact	Body Posture	Tone of Voice	Hands	Facial Expressions	Volume of Voice	Emotion
Non-assertive							
Assertive							
Aggressive							

- one analogy: *Non-assertiveness is when you feel like a door-mat. Aggressiveness is your behavior after you've been a door-mat too long and have too many footprints on your back. Assertiveness is not being walked on, and not walking on others.*

- discuss *how is assertiveness related to self-esteem?*
- discuss *when is it appropriate to be assertive?*
- discuss *what are the possible consequences of changing our behavior toward our co-workers, spouse / boyfriend, family, etc. Are the possible consequences worth it?*

- ask participants for an example of a situation where one participant would like to be more assertive - find out the situation, the emotions associated with the situation, and the desired result of the communication. Then use the formula - *when you do (behavior), I feel (name the emotion), and I would like you to (desired behavior)* as a method of teaching an assertive response.

- brainstorm ways of sabotaging our own ability to be assertive, i.e.
  - not completing statements
  - speaking in a thin or needy voice
  - ending statements as though they were questions
  - diminishing or discounting accomplishments

- if time allows, have participants use the Handout #5 Practicing Assertive Behavior to analyze the situation and develop a script. Roleplay.

- ask participants to practice being assertive once before the next session and be prepared to talk about how well/not well it worked.

Handout #5

PRACTICING ASSERTIVE BEHAVIOUR

PART A

1. Write down a specific situation in which you would like to behave more assertively (express your anger? say no to a request? ask someone for help?).

   _____

   _____

2. What do you wish to accomplish by this assertive behaviour?

   _____

   _____

3. What prevents you from acting assertively?

   _____

   _____

4. What are your personal rights in this situation?

   _____

   _____

5. What would be the worst possible result of your assertive behaviour in this instance?

   _____

   _____

   Best possible result?

   _____

   _____

6. How likely is this "worst possible" result to occur?

   _____

   _____

7. If the "worst possible" happened, could you cope with the situation?

   _____

PART B.

Write out a script of what you and the other person might say during your assertive-behaviour situation.

PART C

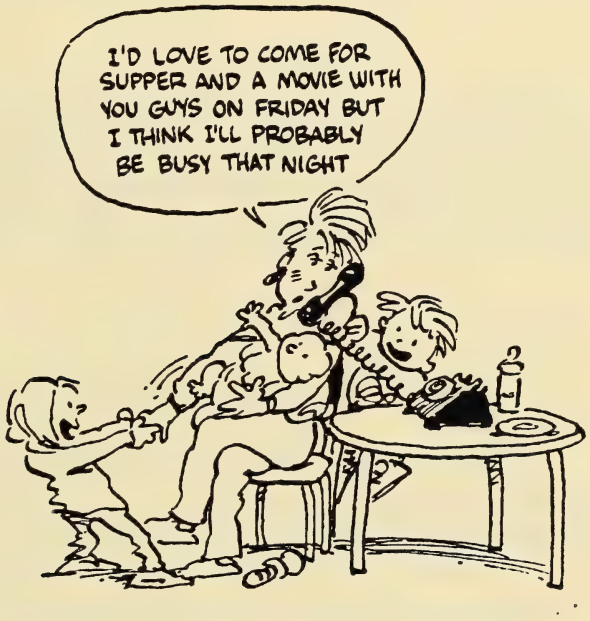
Test your script by role-playing it with other participants. Ask the other participants how you can be more effective in your effort to be assertive.

Adapted from: Peltier, Wanda Joe. ***Displaced Homemakers Vo-Tech Workshop Guide***. Woman's Resource Center Inc. Norman, Oklahoma, 1981.

MODULE 4 - *Am I Like Cinderella?*

Introduction:

Researchers say that by the time a child is about three years of age, she has a clear idea of how little girls are expected to behave and how little boys are expected to behave. Not only does she have a clear idea, she is very resilient to any notion that would challenge her understanding of suitable behaviour. She knows what's "right" and doesn't want to be "wrong". In this module we will explore the different informal methods of teaching girls about acceptable female behaviour, and various informal methods of reinforcing the message. As well, we'll explore the impact of the message on a girl's career planning.



Considerations:

- This session should develop an awareness of sex-role stereotyping without blaming the participants if they are in stereotypical roles.
- Tie in the concept of sex-role stereotyping with goal setting and career planning.

A WOMAN'S PLACE

Purpose:

- to provide an introduction to the concept of stereotypes
- to demonstrate the range of opinions in the group

Time: 13 minutes

Materials: none

Introduction:

This is a quick exercise designed to illustrate the range of opinions in our group. For this exercise there are no right or wrong answers, just opinions. I will read a statement to you. If you agree with the statement, signal with a "thumbs up." If you disagree with the statement, signal with a "thumbs down." If you're not certain, or want to 'sit on the fence', fold your arms in front of your chest, to remain neutral. Remember, "everyone is entitled to her opinion!"

Process:

- explain and demonstrate the hand signals.
- read each statement, pausing to note the group response.
- make note of one or two statements where there is a wide range of opinion, and at the end of the exercise, ask for verbal opinions on the topic, making sure to get as many opinions as possible.
- ask the participants *where do these messages come from?*

Suggested statements:

- boys should have more education than girls
- women and men should equally share child raising
- women should not work on night shifts.
- husbands should earn more than their wives.
- women should be responsible for the housework.
- women are more emotional than men.
- women don't make good bosses.
- men should never cry.
- nursing is a woman's job.
- men are not capable of caring for small children.
- women can't do heavy manual work.

Summary:

Your opinion represents what you believe to be true and right. As we have just demonstrated, different people have different opinions that they have developed over their lifetime. Their opinions represent what they believe to be true and right for them. They are entitled to have their opinions, and they are the only persons who can choose to change them.

When a judgement about an event, person or thing is part of an opinion, no matter whether or not the judgement is positive or negative, it is called a bias. We can gather or inherit biases from our family or culture without realizing it, or we can consciously develop biases from events during our lifetime.

Biases, either positive or negative, can be generalized to apply to people of a certain type, according to their gender, race, age, hair colour, shoe size or whatever. Generalizing a bias is called stereotyping. Stereotyping is a narrow image of a group of people that does not recognize the individuality of the people in the group. In this module we will explore possible stereotypes about women.

Adapted From: Szirom, Tricia. ***Greater Expectations: A Source Book for Working with Girls and Young Women.*** Learning Development Aids. Cambs, England, 1988.

WOMEN ARE...MEN ARE...

Purpose:

- to make a list of stereotypes commonly associated with both genders
- to quickly demonstrate the inaccuracy of stereotypes

Time: 20 minutes

Materials:

- flip chart paper, felt markers

Process:

- divide a sheet of flipchart paper with a vertical line, and title one side with "Women Are", and the other side with "Men Are".
- ask participants to start by completing the sentence "Women Are..." with a word or two that would form an appropriate ending. Then ask for completions to the sentence stub "Men Are..."
- go back and forth between the two columns completing the sentences until you have a number of examples.
- generally as the sentences are completed, it will become obvious that the two columns can be very similar or very different, but that neither column is accurate for all women or men
- if this inaccuracy doesn't show up without prompting, ask the participants how accurate the statements are for all women and for all men.

Summary:

Making judgements about all women and all men is considered to be stereotyping. Stereotypes are generalizations and judgements that are based on general knowledge of the subject, but which do not hold true when examined individually. Stereotypes are useful to people because they allow us to make decisions based on generalized information, which cuts down on the amount of investigating that we have to do to make a decision. Stereotypes are harmful in that they are often based on inaccurate information and often have little relevancy to the individual. We can have stereotypes about any group or class that we perceive as having unique characteristics. Sex-role stereotyping is the name given to generalizations about what is appropriate and inappropriate behavior for women/men.

IF I WAS A MAN, I WOULD...

Purpose:

- to demonstrate that stereotypes exist about what women should do and what men should do (appropriate behaviours).
- to demonstrate that many women believe that they would make different choices about their life paths, if they had been raised as men, and therefore they have had some degree of stereotyped expectations in their own lives.
- to develop an awareness of how sex-role stereotyping limits an individual's use of his/her potential.

Time: 20 minutes

Materials:

- flipchart paper, felt markers

Process:

- ask participants to think about how their lives would be different if they had been born boys and had been raised as boys. Would there have been different options to consider?
- have participants complete the sentence "If I Was A Man, I Would..., and record their responses on flipchart paper.
- discuss how sex-role stereotyping limits an individual's potential **both for men and women**.

THE ROLE OF FAIRYTALES IN SEX-ROLE STEREOTYPING

Purpose:

- to identify the underlying messages from fairytales
- to assess the validity of these messages - if invalid or untrue, to rename the messages myths

Time: 35 minutes

Materials:

- copies of Handout #7 **Fairy Tales and Sex-Role Stereotyping**

Process:

- have volunteers in turn read each of the four abbreviated fairytales aloud.
- ask the following questions of the group *what are the common themes in these fairytales?*
- ask, *which are true realistic "messages" and which are untrue, unrealistic "myths"?*
- read out the multiple choice questions from the second page of the handout, getting responses from the whole group.
- ask the following questions:
  Why have these fairy tales remained so popular with females?
  When you were a young child, what was your favourite fairy tale? Why?
- ask *What can you do about these situations?*
  Believe that at some time you are going to have to support yourself and possibly, your family.
  Keep your options open. Develop a plan for taking care of yourself and your family.

Handout #6

FAIRY TALES AND SEX-ROLE STEREOTYPING

Cinderella

A beautiful hard-working, unassertive girl with a mean step-mother, two selfish step-sisters, and an absent father is rescued from a life of difficulty by a fairy godmother. She is sent to a ball where she meets handsome "Prince Charming." The prince falls in love with Cinderella instantly and pursues her when she runs away from him. They are soon reunited and live happily ever after.

Sleeping Beauty

A beautiful princess is placed under a spell by a wicked fairy and falls asleep for one hundred years. Handsome "Prince Charming" cuts his way through the thorns surrounding the castle, finds Sleeping Beauty, and falls instantly in love with her while she's still asleep. His kiss awakens her, and they live happily ever after.

Snow White

A beautiful princess with a wicked step-mother and an absent father is sent away to die in a forest. She is rescued by seven cute, non-threatening little men who adore and admire her. She earns her keep by doing their housework (very happily). Placed under an evil spell by her jealous step-mother, Snow White falls asleep. Her "Prince Charming" finds her sleeping in a glass case and falls instantly in love with her. His kiss awakens Snow White, and they live happily ever after.

Beauty and the Beast

A beautiful, hard-working girl with two wicked sisters happily keeps house for her absent father. As her father is returning home, he enters the enchanted grounds of a hideous Beast. There he picks a rose that reminds him of his daughter Beauty. Alas, the Beast is furious and insists the father pay with his life. However, Beauty sacrifices herself to save her father. When the Beast sees Beauty, he falls instantly in love with her. Beauty pities the Beast, her compassionate tears break an evil spell, and the Beast is turned into "Prince Charming"! They live happily ever after. Are you surprised?

In most well-loved fairy tales:

Our heroine is...
a) a beautiful and docile young girl who must be rescued.
b) a plain, middle-aged saleswoman who supports her five children.
c) a plucky kid named Esmerelda who rescues handsome princes.

The hero is...
a) a rude, ignorant clod who is not under an evil spell and remains boorish.
b) a dashing young man of royal blood named Prince Charming.
c) a butcher named Bruno.

Our heroine's life changes because...
a) she is capable, self-motivated, independent, assertive, and not afraid to try new behaviours.
b) magical forces are operating.
c) she deserves good fortune and life is fair.

Our heroine's job skills include...
a) cleaning house
b) looking beautiful
c) being good
d) all of the above

After the story ends...
a) the handsome couple lives happily ever after.
b) the initial infatuation wears off, the bride and groom work hard to develop a mature, interdependent relationship involving mutual trust and sharing.
c) Prince Charming turns out to be weak and sniveling and our heroine is stuck with crying babies, severe PMS, and an unpaid mortgage on the castle.

Source: Wilson, Linda. ***Discover: An Educational Opportunity for Women in Transition.*** The Women's Resource Center. Sarasota, Florida, 1987.

SEX-ROLE STEREOTYPING IN THE MEDIA

Purpose:

- to explore the messages that are portrayed in the media about the roles females play in society

Time: 40 minutes

Materials:

- assorted old magazines
- glue, scissors
- newsprint or flipchart paper, felt markers

Process:

- form small groups, and give each group necessary materials, magazines, glue, etc.
- assign each group one role. Ask each group to think about the advertisements they see in papers, magazines and on television that portray women in that particular role.
  i.e. - housewife
  - mother
  - business woman
  - sex object
  - secondary to men
  - positive/equal to men
- ask each group to clip pictures/advertisements from the magazines that represent the role that they have been assigned, and to create a collage depicting that role.
- hang the collages on the walls, and ask everyone to look at all the collages which are displayed.
- as a large group, discuss the messages that they receive from each collage.
- based on these collages, ask the participants the following questions: *Who would you like as a neighbour? as a best friend? as your doctor? Who would you like to work for? Who would you like your child to marry?*

- discuss what other types of media provide messages. Ask participants, *are they similar messages to those received from magazines?*
- discuss the purposes of the messages. *Why do companies spend billions of dollars a year on advertising of this kind?*
- ask participants, what messages do men receive from the media about what is deemed appropriate behaviour for men?

Considerations:

- Often one advertisement will have many messages - a sexy business woman, submissive to and dependent on men.
- Everyone is bombarded with messages, men included. Because these messages are so pervasive, so much a part of our everyday life, it would be difficult to recognize these messages without an exercise like this. Be aware of any guilt that lingers as a result of this exercise, and diffuse it.

Adapted from: Eberhart, Louise. ***Working With Women's Groups: Volume I.*** Whole Person Associates Inc. Duluth, MN, 1987.

ATTITUDES AND OPINIONS: WHERE DO THEY COME FROM?

Purpose:

- to personalize sex-role stereotyping by examining the messages that individual participants have received during their lives.

Time: 25 minutes

Materials:

- Copies of Handout #8 **Attitudes and Opinions: Where Do They Come From?**

Process:

- have participants fill out the handout with the messages that they remember receiving as they were growing up.
- ask for someone to volunteer a message that she received that was very strong for her, and perhaps to explain the circumstances behind that message.
- if participants are comfortable, find out if everyone received the same message, and if not what other messages and what other circumstances were behind those messages.

Considerations:

- It is important to verify that adults, particularly parents, relatives and teachers, were passing on messages that they had learned from their experiences and from their lifetimes about what was appropriate for women, and that they did not intentionally pass on wrong, inaccurate, or misleading information.

ATTITUDES AND OPINIONS: WHERE DO THEY COME FROM?

What you see and hear within your own family will greatly influence your thoughts, feelings, attitudes and opinions about yourself, appropriate behaviour for yourself and for others, and your expectations for the future.

What have you learned from your family? Do you want your children to share these beliefs? The following exercise will help you decide.

I. When you were growing up, what messages or information did you receive **from your mother and other adult women** about the importance of the following for girls:

Success in school? _____

_____

Appearance? _____

_____

Marriage? _____

_____

Career? _____

_____

Children? _____

_____

II. When you were growing up, what messages or information did you receive **from your father and other adult men** about the importance of the following for girls:

Success in school? _____

_____

Appearance? _____

_____

Marriage? _____

_____

Career? _____

_____

Children?_____

_____

III. What messages would you **tell your daughter** about the importance of the following for girls:

Success in school?_____

_____

Appearance?_____

_____

Marriage?_____

_____

Career?_____

_____

Children?_____

_____

IV. What messages would **you tell your son** about the importance of the following for boys:

Success in school? _____

_____

Appearance?_____

_____

Marriage?_____

_____

Career?_____

_____

Children?_____

_____

Adapted From: Szirom, Tricia. ***Greater Expectations: A Sourcebook for Working With Girls and Young Women.*** Learning Development Aids. Cambs, England, 1988.

CLOSING EXERCISE

Purpose:

- to provide a close to the session
- to provide an opportunity for the facilitator to focus individually upon each participant

Time: 10 minutes

Materials: none

Process:

- have participants form a circle with their chairs.
- ask each participant in turn to finish the statement, "I feel _____ about today, and I would like to see _____ tomorrow."

MODULE 5 - *Where Do I Go From Here?*

INTRODUCTION

We first looked at our personal values in the exercise "What's In My Pocket or Purse?" in the first module of this workshop. In the first half of this module we'll look at vaious ways of discovering what is important to each of us. In the latter half of the module we'll look at individual personal planning. which will be based on understanding what's important to each of us.

Considerations:

- It is not enough to simply encourage women to develop. They must also be given sufficient personal support and help in surpassing the emotional and social barriers to their goals.
- Encourage acknowledgement of the realities of working women's lives. Anxieties about work and career planning are legitimate.

VALUES

Purpose:

- to explore participant's values in various areas
- to have fun

Time: 23 minutes

Materials:

- copies of Handout #8 **Values Questionnaire**
- pencils or pens

Process:

- have participants write down their responses to the Values Questionnaire.
- at the end of 10 - 15 minutes, discuss their responses to two or three of the questions in the questionnaire.

VALUES QUESTIONNAIRE

1. If your house was burning, and all the occupants or members of the family and pets were safely outside, what would you grab on your way out? If you had time to make one or two trips back into the house before the flames became too intense, what else would you try to save from the flames?

2. What are you saving for?

3. What would you not be caught dead buying?

4. List two very foolish purchases you have made.

5. What do you show your guests (or hope they see, or hope they comment on) when they come to your house?

6. List three words you would like people to use to describe you.

7. Whose praise do you most want to earn?

8. What did success mean in your family, when you were growing up?

9. What are three ways you would hate to be described?

Adapted from: North Island Women's Secretariat. ***Working Together For Change***. Ptarmagin Press, Campbell River, BC, 1984.

FANTASIES ABOUT MYSELF

Purpose:

- to explore the concept of values from an unusual angle - our fantasies or lies about ourselves

Time: 25 minutes

Materials: none

Process:

- explain to the group that our fantasies about who or what we would like to be or do can be important indicators of what is important to us: our values. In this exercise we're going to fantasize and exaggerate!
- have the group break into dyads. Instruct each participant to think about her adolescence and then introduce herself to her partner. In this exercise she can tell all the fantasies and exaggerations she wants to tell in order to introduce herself as the person she would have liked to have been when she was a teen. Make sure the participants switch roles so that each partner introduces herself.
- ask the group, the following questions: *What were some of the characteristics that you valued as a teen? Have your teenage values remained the same? or changed?*
- have each participant rejoin her partner, and ask each participant now to fantasize about the present, introducing herself as the person she would like to be.
- ask the group the following question: *Are the values you just indicated your own values or are they values of society?*
- determine if there any common values expressed by the group participants. Ask the participants *how did so many people obtain these values?*

Considerations:

Some participants will be delighted by the opportunity to exaggerate and will find this exercise to be a way of really expressing themselves!

Adapted from: Eberhart, Louise. ***Working With Women's Groups: Volume 1.*** Whole Person Associates Inc. Duluth, MN, 1987.

EXAMINING YOUR VALUES AND GOALS

Purpose:

- to clarify personal priorities, by ranking value categories

Time: 25 minutes

Materials:

- copies of Handout #9 **Examining Your Values and Goals Exercise**
- pencils or pens

Process:

- explain that most people hold personal opinions about how important or valued certain ideas or concepts are to them. Knowing how highly we value certain concepts, how we prioritize these concepts, and what values may be in conflict with others is the foundation for setting goals, making decisions and carrying out personal plans.
- have participants rank items on the handout, with number one being the most important to them, and the number 14 being the least important.
- ask participants to share in turn, what they valued as most important, and what they valued as least important.
- explain that roughly speaking, the values they rank as the bottom one third of their list, are values that are not at all important to them. The values that they rank in the middle one third of their list are goals they have already achieved. The values they rate in the top one third are goals they are working on achieving.

EXAMINING YOUR VALUES AND GOALS EXERCISE

In order to clarify your own priorities, rank the items on this list in terms of your own values.

RANKING	(1) most important (14) least important
( ) **Affection**	- to obtain and share companionship and affection
( ) **Duty**	- to dedicate myself to what I call duty
( ) **Expertness**	- to become an expert in a particular area
( ) **Health**	- to work towards soundness of body and mind
( ) **Independence**	- to have freedom of thought and action
( ) **Leadership**	- to develop leadership skills
( ) **Parenthood**	- to raise a fine family
( ) **Pleasure**	- to enjoy life, to be happy and content
( ) **Powerful**	- to have control over others
( ) **Prestige**	- to become well known
( ) **Security**	- to have a secure and stable position
( ) **Self-realization**	- to maximize personal development
( ) **Service**	- to contribute to the satisfaction of others
( ) **Wealth**	- to earn a great deal of money

Adapted from: Kampf, Rachel, ed. ***Discovering Life Skills, Volume II.*** Y.W.C.A. of Metropolitan Toronto, Toronto, Canada, 1976.

VALUES: CHOOSING, PRIZING, ACTING

Purpose:

- to define values

Time: 15 minutes

Materials:

- flipchart paper, felt markers

Process:

- explain values, in terms of choosing, prizing, acting:

A VALUE IS SOMETHING I...	THE THREE STEPS OF VALUES...
A) Choose freely B) Choose from alternatives C) Choose after considering the consequences	CHOOSING
A) Prize and Cherish B) Publicly Affirm	PRIZING
A) Act on B) Act on Repeatedly	ACTING

- discuss, *where do values come from?*
- ask participants the following questions: *do the values you choose reflect your parent's values? your friend's? your church's? your teacher's? your neighbourhood's?*

Adapted from: North Island Women's Secretariat. ***Working Together For Change***. Ptarmagin Press, Campbell River, BC, 1984.

GOAL SETTING

Purpose:

- to learn the steps involved in goal-setting
- to fully develop one personal goal

Time: 60 minutes

Materials:

- paper
- copies of Handouts #10 **"Goal Setting for Your Life Exercise"** Handout #11 **"Goal Setting With All The Details Exercise"** and Handout #12 **Autobiography in Five Short Chapters"**

Introduction:

Explain that setting goals is one thing, reaching them is another. We've all set many goals we've never reached. Chances are that's because we didn't think in terms of what steps needed to be taken before achieving those goals, the barriers that might be faced etc. our goal through clearly. Successful goal-setters have a system, a series of questions that they answer which allows them to plan how they would achieve those goals and what it would take to succeed.

Explain that there are many areas of our lives in which we can set goals. Explain further that all aspects of our lives are also interrelated. It's hard to change one thing without affecting another. So it's important to choose our goals according to our values and knowing the consequences of our actions.

Considerations:

- Participants will not solve all their problems during this exercise. This exercise is intended to encourage them to look toward their future with confidence in their abilities to change their lives for the better.
- Single mothers who are receiving social assistance tend to be very busy with their families. However, they are often in a unique situation: they can anticipate receiving social assistance for a predictable period of time. If goals to improve their education or skills are chosen **carefully** and set **realistically,** the goals can be reached while receiving assistance, enabling them to secure a better job when their period of receiving social assistance is over.

Process:

- provide copies of the handout "Goal Setting For Your Life." Have participants choose one category from the list in which they would like to set a goal today. Explain that looking at all areas will take considerably more time than we have today.

Handout #10

GOAL SETTING FOR YOUR LIFE EXERCISE

First, dream...don't be judgemental...write down everything you want to have, for each of the categories below. Be as specific as possible. Write down all the details so that you can clearly visualize your dream. Then put the dream sheet away for a day or two, bring it out and look at it again.

Travel and vacations - where and how

Automobile - kind, color, options

Housing - size, style, extras, location, etc.

Money - earnings, savings, investments, budget, insurance, charge accounts

Career - salary, benefits, promotions, activities, job satisfaction, effectiveness, competence

Children and Family - if, how many, when, education, activities, shared time, listening habits, role model, respectful, loving

Friendship - respect, helping of others, sense of humour, listening habits, manners, caring

Health and appearance - body weight, exercise, nutrition, grooming

Spiritual - church involvement, religious studies, inner peace, sense of purpose, belief

Mind - education, recall, reading, imagination, curiosity

When you take your dream sheet out again, write down beside each item WHY you want to achieve that particular dream. If you can't clearly write down a reason WHY you want to achieve this dream, then you are not serious about it...SO STRIKE IT OFF THE PAGE.

Now, write a list of the most important dreams you want to achieve, and then decide on the most important one or two dreams. These two dreams are the beginning of your major goals - these are the first set of goals you need to work toward achieving.

Adapted from: Ziglar, Zig. ***Goals with Zig Ziglar.*** (Videodisc), 1987.

GOAL SETTING WITH ALL THE DETAILS FOR MY VERY IMPORTANT GOALS

1. Identify the goal - make your goal specific, with as many details as you can write down to answer the question - *"what is my goal"*?

_____

_____

Then ask yourself:

	Yes	No
Is it really my goal?	( )	( )
Is it morally right and fair?	( )	( )
Is this goal a step toward my long range goals?	( )	( )
Will I try hard to reach this goal?	( )	( )
Can I see myself reaching this goal?	( )	( )

If you answered NO to any of the five questions above, you should redefine your goal. If you can answer YES to the five questions above, then you are ready to go on with the rest of the goal setting process below.

2. Set a deadline for achieving your goal - *by when do I want to have accomplished my goal*?

_____

3. List the obstacles you must overcome if you wish to accomplish your goal? - *what are some of the problems I can foresee*?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

4. Identify the people and organizations you need to work with - *who can help me? - anyone else?*

_____

_____

_____

_____

5. List the skills and knowledge required to reach this goal - *what do I have to know how to do? - do I know how now?*

_____

_____

_____

_____

6. Develop a plan of action:
   - *what are the things I have to do in order to achieve my goal?*
   - what's the first thing?
   - what's the second?
   - what comes after that?
   - what deadlines do I have to meet?
   - when should I have the first thing finished? the second? the third?

WHAT?	WHEN?
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

7. Evaluation - *how will I know when I reach my goal?*

_____

_____

8. List the benefits - *what's in it for me? is it worth it?*

_____

_____

9. Take the first step toward reaching your goal - *what is the first thing I have to do?* Start working on it before the end of today.

_____

Adapted from: Ziglar, Zig. ***Goals with Zig Ziglar.*** (Videodisc), 1987.

Handout #12

AUTOBIOGRAPHY IN FIVE SHORT CHAPTERS

by Portia Nelson

I. I walk down the street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I fall in...I am lost...I am helpless.
It isn't my fault.
It takes forever to find a way out.

II. I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I pretend I don't see it.
I fall in again.
I can't believe I am in the same place, but
it isn't my fault.
It still takes a long time to get out.

III. I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I see it is there.
I still fall in...it's a habit.
My eyes are open. I know where I am.
It is my fault. I get out immediately.

IV. I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I walk around it.

V. I walk down another street.

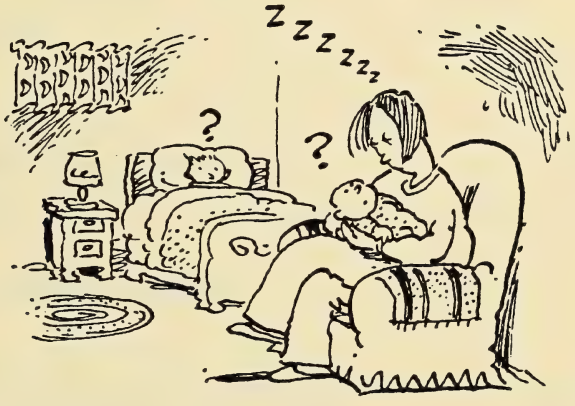
Source: Black, Claudia. ***Repeat After Me.*** M.A.C. Publishing, Denver, CO., 1985.

MODULE 6 - *Managing My Life*

Introduction:

In an earlier module, we discussed the concepts of stereotyping and sex-role stereotyping. Similar to the ways in which we learned about appropriate behaviour for girls and boys, we also learned about appropriate ways that a "family" should be. In this session, we will explore our stereotypes about the family, and compare myths and realities.

Following our exploration of "family", we will spend some time looking at stress: what it is, what causes it and what we can do about reducing it. This session on managing your life will really be your opportunity to provide your perspective and to help out others with your creativity. Since this is our final session, we will also be finishing this workshop with an evaluation of the workshop, and closing exercises.



Considerations:

- Much of the stress we experience daily is created by our perception of "should": this **shouldn't** be happening to me; they **shouldn't** behave that way; I **should** uphold this standard which has been set for me. When circumstances are different than I think they **should** be, stress occurs. Exploring some of the origins of our "shoulds" allows a more realistic assessment of them, then we can chose to keep them or discard them as unfitting.
- Stress management skills take time to develop. Encourage participants to continue assessing the cause of their stresses and learning management skills after this workshop concludes.

WHAT IS A FAMILY?

Introduction:

Socialization teaches us about appropriate behaviour for girls and women, and we looked at what we called "sex-role stereotyping" in Module 4. In the same way, we learned lessons about appropriate functions, rules and participants in the family. In the following exercise we will explore our expectations for the family, decide how realistic these expectations are, and determine if they work for us.

Purpose:

- to explore stereotypes about the family
- to relieve stress and reinforce support systems

Time: 30 minutes

Materials:

- flipchart paper, felt markers

Part I - Exploring Stereotypes

Process:

- on flipchart paper, brainstorm responses to the question *what does the word 'family' mean to you? What images or feelings come to mind when the word 'family' is used?* Summarize the results verbally, and post the chart on the wall.
- again, on flipchart paper, brainstorm responses to, *what are the functions of the family? What tasks has a family traditionally been responsible for?* i.e:
  - providing food, clothing and shelter for family members
  - conceiving and raising children
  - providing emotional support
  - providing sexual fulfillment for adults
  - teaching children values, rules and skills
  - providing financial security
- post this chart on the wall.
- again, on flipchart paper, brainstorm responses to, *what tasks have individual members traditionally been responsible for? For instance, has one member traditionally been responsible for providing emotional support?* Indicate traditional assignments of duties on the charts.

- summarize the results and indicate that these results represent the stereotypes that we may have about how a family **should** be. Let's take a look at how realistic this is for today.

Part II - Exploring Realities

Process:

- explain that the stereotypical family composed of mom, dad, two kids and a dog, living in a house with flowers and a white picket fence is obviously not precisely the way most families are. This stereotype can be hard on people who live in other family patterns because they don't seem to conform to the expected patterns.

- ask the participants *what are some **other** family patterns?* i.e:
  - a single adult
  - a single adult with a child or children
  - a couple with children living with extended family
  - a couple without children living with extended family
  - a dual-worker family where two adults work outside the home
  - a role reversal situation, where the 'husband' works within the home and the 'wife' works outside the home
  - two single adults work part-time and share child-raising
  - single adults sharing resources with other unrelated adults
  - adults with an extended family composed primarily of friends
  - a couple with children from previous relationships

- discuss responses to the following question: *it can be difficult to have a family pattern that is different from the expected family pattern. What specifically, are some of the difficulties experienced by single moms?* i.e:

  - total responsibility for the children
  - in-laws or other family who may have "vanished" and cannot provide emotional and financial support
  - inadequate income and resources
  - changed emotional support system
  - change in friendships
  - strained relationships
  - pressure from others to conform to the stereotypical norms
  - pressure from others to conform to the norms of "family" in which they were raised

Adapted from: Voight, Nancy, dir. ***Becoming: A Participant's Guide For High School Students.*** Community Based Guidance Program, University of North Carolina. Chapel, N.C., 1980.

EXPLORING THE CONCEPT OF STRESS:

Theory:

The word stress means different things to different people. Not all stress is bad; without some stress in our lives, we can become bored and unchallenged. It's not really having stress put on us that is the problem; the problem is in having too much stress.

Stress can be defined as anything that puts pressure on a person. Stress affects us emotionally, physically, and mentally. The pressure can range from life threatening situations to daily living situations which cause anxiety.

When faced with any stress - a threat, or unusual event - our bodies naturally create a "fight or flight" reaction. Our heart rate goes up as our body prepares to supply emergency energy to our muscles. Perspiration increases. Muscles tense. Our breathing rate changes. This natural physical response can get us out of danger. Difficulties arise, however, when our bodies stay in that responsive state for a long period of time.

When we are at a level where we are experiencing too much stress, we may feel as though we are living on the edge, where there is too much challenge. We may feel panic, and have difficulty listening to or following instructions. We can often list a million things we 'gotta do.' We may have upset stomachs or difficulty breathing.

When we are at a level where we experience an insufficient amount of stress, we may feel bored, disinterested, and apathetic. Our life may feel routine, and not very challenging. We may feel a lack of power or control and be afraid to try anything new. We lack enthusiasm.

The challange in managing stress is to find a level of challange wherein we experience enough stress to be challanged, but not so much that we sustain that fight or flight reaction for too long.

The world around us is loaded with potential stressors, but people vary tremendously in their reaction to stressors. What causes great anxiety in one, may not bother anyone else at all. This means that stress management must be personalized.

Introduction:

Being different from society's expectations can be difficult. For instance, being solely responsible for parenting your children could sometimes be called "stressful"!

Purpose:

- to develop a working definition of "stress"
- to become aware of a range of situations that may be stressful

Time: 23 minutes

Materials:

- flipchart paper, felt markers

Process:

- ask the participants the question *what is stress?*
- have participants in groups of two or three, make a list of the things that cause stress in their lives. Caution the group that levels of stress is individual and unique. One person may find a situation to be quite stressful, while the other does not.
- explain that we can't escape being overstressed sometimes. We can, however, try to prevent some of it, and learn skills to help us manage stress better.

HANDLING STRESS

Purpose:

- to share personal methods of reducing or handling stress
- to investigate new methods of reducing or handling stress

Time: 15 minutes

Materials:

- flip chart, felt markers
- copies of Handouts #13 **Ways to Avoid Stress**, Handout #14 **Ways to Reduce Stress** and Handout #15 **Ways to Relieve Stress**

Process:

- have participants brainstorm constructive ways of reducing or handling stress. i.e.:
  - establishing priorities for tasks
  - finding humour in the situation
  - relaxing their standards
  - counting their blessings
  - exercising
  - doing hobbies and having fun
  - finding someone to talk to
  - unwinding before bedtime
  - phoning ahead
  - saying "no" more often
  - being early for appointments, meetings etc.
  - not relying on one's memory, writing down important information
  - preparing as many things the night before as possible.
- have participants brainstorm destructive ways of handling stress. i.e.:
  - drinking too much
  - smoking or eating too much
  - abusing drugs
  - being physically violent toward people or property
  - having workaholic behaviour
  - being promiscuous
  - withdrawing from social contacts
  - attempting to control others through threats or intimidation
  - buying things that can't be afforded
- ask each participant in turn, *what is your favourite, constructive way of handling stress?* and discuss.

- explain that our ability to handle stress depends on our self-esteem, circumstances in the situation, our physical and mental health, the way we look at the situation, and how much importance we attach to the moment. If passing a test is not the least bit important to us, we won't experience much stress!

- distribute copies of Handout #13 Ways to Avoid Stress, Handout #14 Ways to Reduce Stress, and Handout #15 Ways to Relieve Stress

REDUCING STRESS

Purpose:

- to explore the various ways of coping with a stressor that impacts in many areas.

Time: 30 minutes

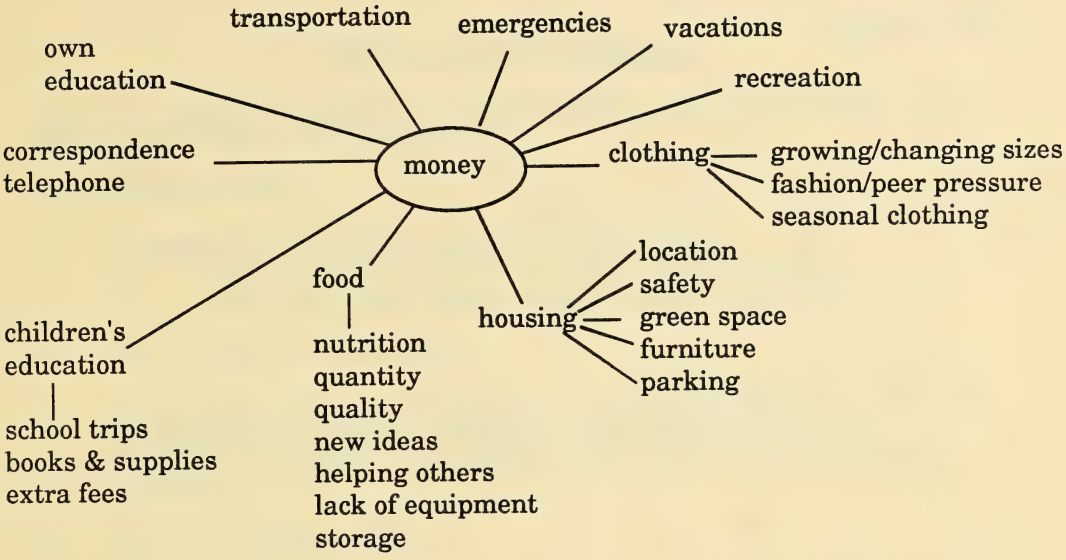
Materials:

- flipchart and paper, felt markers

Process:

- have participants brainstorm a list of stressors in their particular lives.
- suggest that part of reducing stress is in creatively dealing with stress producing situations. Ask participants to choose one stress from the list which affects each of them, or a stressor that they would like to work on as a group.
- as lack of money is usually chosen the mind map diagram that follows is an example of the "lack of money" mind map. Write "money" in the centre of the flipchart and ask participants what parts of their lives are affected by lack of money? Draw a mind map similar to the one that follows.

Mind Map: Lack of Money



- ask the participants the question *what is the real problem?* The mind map will illustrate that the problem "lack of money" is really many interrelated problems. We can work on the problem "lack of money" from many directions - we can develop creative ways of meeting our needs: increase our income slightly by working a few hours, get a good full-time job, etc., or by creatively approaching the areas in which we would like to be able to spend more money.
- determine the amount of additional income that a social allowance recipient would be allowed to earn.
- have participants brainstorm creative ways of supplementing income and jot these suggestions down on the flipchart.
- have participants brainstorm creative ways to supplement their income as a low-cost solution to one problem area above, such as recreation.
- summarize this exercise by indicating that often a problem that seems too huge to be tackled can be broken down into pieces which are much more manageable.

Consideration:

The best solution to the problem "lack of money" may not be to immediately obtain a full-time job. A better solution might be to temporarily supplement the income or consider other creative ways of making the money stretch, while long-term goals are achieved.

WAYS TO AVOID STRESS

You can't avoid all stresses but you may be able to avoid some of them and thereby help reduce your stress level.

1) BE PREPARED

Prepare as many things as possible ahead of time
e.g. - make lunches for school, work, etc. the night before
- have your winter parka cleaned before the snow falls

2) ANTICIPATE YOUR NEEDS

Little things such as having quarters ready for the laundry; change for the newspaper carriers and parking meters; batteries for the flashlight; candles for power failures can help avoid some upsetting situations.

3) SAY "NO" MORE OFTEN

Gracefully "bow out" of attending or becoming a member groups that you don't enjoy; turn down invitations from people or social events you don't like. Generally weed out unnecessary commitments.

4) ALLOW EXTRA TIME

It's better to arrive ahead of time than to be frantically rushing to get somewhere. You can always stop for a cup of coffee, catch your breath and gather your thoughts together in those extra few minutes you will have saved.

5) DON'T RELY ON YOUR MEMORY

Write down and carry with you important addresses and phone numbers. Get a map of unfamiliar areas. Keep (and check) appointment calendars for important errands or dates. Keep a notebook for jotting down information.

6) SET APPOINTMENTS AHEAD OF TIME

If you're always waiting for others, tell them to meet you earlier than you plan to arrive.

7) REARRANGE WORK HOURS, IF POSSIBLE

A half hour change in arrival and departure times from work can make a big difference in the traffic, crowds, etc. and facilitating the needs or commitments of other family members.

8) MAKE DUPLICATES

Have extra sets of keys easily accessible to you if you lock yourself out of the house. Make copies of important papers, then keep the originals in a safe place so they're available when you need them.

WAYS TO REDUCE STRESS

Although you cannot avoid the stressors in life, you may be able to make changes to reduce the level of stress. The following are some ideas which may help reduce your stress level.

1) ESTABLISH PRIORITIES

Decide which activities you enjoy or must do, then weed out anything which doesn't fit into one of these two areas. Then look at your "must do" list and see if there's something there which you may be able to delegate to someone else.

2) CHANGE YOUR PERSPECTIVE

Instead of worrying about "what will happen if...; try saying to yourself "So what if....". Will whatever is happening matter next week? next month? next year? If it will make a big difference, then it deserves your coolest, calmest approach.

3) FIND HUMOR IN IT

Try to find some small funny factor in the whole situation. If everyone was perfect, life would be quite boring. So laugh at yourself. Loosen up and enjoy life.

4) RELAX YOUR STANDARDS

Doing everything perfectly is not only unnecessary, it's boring. Even if someone else does the job differently than you would have -- is your way really the only way? Take a shortcut once in a while - not everything has to be "A-1" all the time.

5) COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS

Nothing is so bad that it couldn't be worse. If you find yourself wallowing in self-pity, take a look around you. You won't have to look far to find others in equally or more difficult situations than you are.

6) ESTABLISH A SERENE PLACE AND TIME OF YOUR OWN

Some quiet place where you can retreat for even just a few minutes can be very relaxing. Give yourself a chance to "catch your breath" and "gather your thoughts together."

7) BE PREPARED TO WAIT

Always take a book or some other time-filler with you when you have to go to an appointment. That way if you are kept waiting you'll have something to do with your time, instead of being stressed about wasting your time or that you could be doing something else.

8) TAKE ADVANTAGE OF YOUR BODY RHYTHMS

Everyone seems to have their own body rhythms. There are times in the day when you feel more energetic and productive than others. Schedule heavier or more complicated tasks when you're at your peak.

9) MAKE CONTINGENCY PLANS

Always have an alternative available to you. If one project or job is delayed - do you have something else that you can use the time for. A "rained-out picnic" could spoil your day, if you don't have something else planned "just in case."

10) PHONE AHEAD

If there's been some delay in your schedule, it can save a lot of worry if you give the person waiting for you a call. In that way, you won't be wasting their time and you'll be able to relax a little.

WAYS TO RELIEVE STRESS

When you feel you are under stress, try using some of these techniques to help you relax and rid your body of built-up tensions and anxieties.

1) RELAXATION TECHNIQUES

The relaxation response is the opposite of the stress response. The positive effects of relaxation techniques can last for several hours after they have been practised.

2) EXERCISE

Enjoyable, non-competitive exercise can help release built-up tensions in the body. The key here is to find some form of exercise that will not increase your stress level due to intense competition.

3) HOBBIES AND OTHER ENJOYABLE ACTIVITIES

Pleasurable activities are important to everyone. Give yourself a break! Do some of those things you've never had time for. It can be anything - a hobby, reading, music or joining a club, as long as you are able to relax and enjoy yourself.

4) FIND SOMEONE TO TALK TO

The person should be a good listener. Someone you can pour your feelings to without having to worry about being judged.

5) BE ASSERTIVE

Learn to express yourself in a healthy manner. Bottled-up feelings can greatly increase your stress level. There are several opportunities to take courses, sessions or workshops on assertiveness training and communication skills. A session like one of these may be of great benefit to you, if you give it a try.

6) UNWIND BEFORE BEDTIME

Do some stretching exercises to help relax your muscles. Have a warm bath or shower. Then take a little time to do something which has a calming effect on you. Putting your work and worries aside for awhile before going to bed may help you sleep better.

FORMING THE BRIDGE

Purpose:

- to provide participants with a link to other supports. it is essential to provide participants with contacts who will be able to assist them in their efforts to achieve their goals, and who will help them develop a career plan.

Time: 15 minutes

Materials:

- representatives of community serving agencies who will be available to these participants after the workshop to support further career planning.
- brochures, etc., about resources and community serving agencies.

Process:

- if possible, have short guest appearances by the counsellors or consultants who are available to individuals to help deal with particular issues or concerns discussed in the workshop sessions and provide personal introductions.
- provide relevant printed material about resources in the community including resources that are available through accessing the Alberta government's toll-free RITE line.

MEET THE NEW ME!

Purpose:

- to help participants publicly affirm the goals they have set for themselves
- to provide a positive way for participants to encourage each other's goals.
- to establish closure

Time: 20 minutes

Materials: paper, pencils

Process:

- have each participant write down the date one year from today. Ask them to then jot down a few words in answer to the following questions:
  - *What goal have you achieved?*
  - *How are you feeling?*
  - *How would you describe the "new" you?*
- in a round, ask each participant to stand up, and using her full name, introduce herself to the group as though it is a year later, and as though all positive self-care plans have been accomplished.

  For instance:

  "Hi, I'm _____. I'd like to introduce the new me! In the last year I _____ and now I am feeling _____
- encourage the group to applaud, cheer, whistle, etc. to reinforce the achievement.

Adapted from: Tubesing, Nancy. ***Structured Exercises in Wellness Promotion: Volume #1.*** Whole Person Press. Duluth, M.N., 1983.

EVALUATION:

Purpose:

- to have participants provide the facilitator with feedback about the workshop.

Time: 15 minutes

Materials:

- copies of Handout #16 **Evaluation Form**
- pencils or pens

Process:

- ensure participants that their responses are confidential.
- have participants complete the evaluation form.

TAKING STOCK

(not to be confused with cattle rustling)

I DIDN'T LIKE

FOR NEXT TIME...

I'LL BE ABLE TO FOLLOW-UP THESE SESSIONS WITH...

If I were running these sessions...

I LIKED

and I...

A PROBLEM IHAD WHICH WAS SOLVED...

Source: Youth Employment Services Centre, Edmonton, Alberta.

CLOSING EXERCISE:

Purpose:

- to end the day and the workshop on a positive, warm note.
- to have participants take away with them something that will be a wonderfully, uplifting reminder of the workshop.

Time: 15 minutes

Materials:

- paper
- masking tape
- pens, pencils or felt-markers

Process:

- provide any closing messages for the group.
- tape a sheet of paper to each person's back.
- ask each person to write a warm, personal message (anonymously) to each participant by writing on the sheets of paper (some interesting circles and lines of writers will form!).
- when everyone has finished writing, ask the participants to remove the pieces of paper from their backs and to read the messages they have been given.
- greet the participants by name, shake hands if appropriate, wish them well, remind them of the other resources that have been set up for them and say good-bye.

cut here

Hush little Joey
don't you cry.
Mommy will teach you
to knot your bow tie.

Hush little Susie
no more bad dreams.
Mommy and you
will make a very good team.

Hush little children
don't despair.
Mommy understands
this doesn't seem fair.

Children

Challenges

Choices

Single Moms Planning Tomorrow

· a workshop ·

Have you ever:

- wondered why Prince Charming hasn't come to rescue you?
- wondered how to express your feelings without feeling bad?
- felt like you are not being heard?
- been confused about your future?
- felt defeated?
- been overwhelmed by parenthood?

This workshop will answer some of your questions.

Children

Challenges

Choices

Single Moms Planning Tomorrow

WHEN:

WHERE:

SPONSORED BY:

COST: NO CHARGE

A planning workshop for single mothers on social assistance.

The purpose of this workshop is to:

- affirm independence
- enhance self-esteem
- refresh planning skills
- explore attitudes
- share coping methods
- plan paths to employment and independence

N.L.C. - B.N.C.
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